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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Did you check out
the 27th Flame Tree
Arts Festival?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
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INSIDE



Immigration Rally

Thousands of immigrants and activists rallied in cities across the country, attempting to reinvigorate calls for reform.

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Treasure Found

A treasure trove is found in a shipwreck off Africa, laden with tons of copper ingots, elephant tusks, gold coins.

WORLD...Page 11



New Feet

Jingle Luis has never walked on the bottoms of her feet. But Jingle may not have to accept the condition much longer.

MAHARLIKA...Page 12



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Dignitaries look on while Gov. Benigno R. Fitial makes his way toward the podium to deliver his State of the Commonwealth Address.

STATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH ADDRESS

Blunt words, blunt message

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial had some strong words for the Legislature, which he blamed for the power crisis, in his State of the Commonwealth Address yesterday.

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Businesses: Speeches were realistic, spot on

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce and Hotel Association

of the Northern Marianas gave a thumbs-up to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's State of the Commonwealth Address delivered

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REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

As agreed upon, all but one of the legislative members dressed down for the State of the Commonwealth Address. The men showed up in normal session attire—shirt and tie—instead of wearing business suits. The members ditched formal attire this year to show their “solidarity” with the suffering public.

Rep. Stanley T. Torres was the only member to break the dress code.

■■■

As House members were led to their seating assignments, a number of them

See **REPORTERS'** on Page 4

Pete A. defends federalization stance



By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio defended yesterday the pro-federalization stance that he said had made him somewhat of an outcast in the Commonwealth's political community.

Tenorio, in his State of the Washington Office Report, said that he only decided to work with the U.S. Congress on the immigration “federalization” bill to make sure the legislation took into account the concerns of the local community.

He added that he would not

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CNMI Washington Representative Pete A. Tenorio delivers his State of the Washington Office Report.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Fire burns canoe behind museum. **PAGE 3**

NMI to be included in DOD Economic Program. **PAGE 5**

Local

Governor elated with Rota charter flights

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial recently congratulated Pacific Development, Inc. and its parent company, Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd., for the successful start of their charter flights to Rota.

The islands' chief executive added that the 40 charter flights serviced by Continental Airlines in the next two years will be a big boost not only to the economy of the CNMI's southernmost island but the entire Commonwealth as well.

"New charter flights for Rota

represent a shining bright spot for the CNMI economy. The new flights also represent a new travel opportunity for Japanese tourists who wish to get away from hectic city life and get back to the tranquility offered by a peaceful natural environment and a warm, friendly island culture."

The governor said unlike Guam or Hawaii, "Rota offers splendid opportunities for eco-tourism and is devoid of excessive commercialism."

PDI president Yoichi Matsumura thanked the governor for his administration's help in

making the Rota charter flights a reality. He added that his company will continue to work closely with government to help grow the island's tourism industry.

"Finally, the dream project of KNT and the people of Rota has become a reality. We are very happy that we were able to make this contribution to the CNMI."

He also agreed with Fitial's comment that Rota offers a totally distinct experience for tourists, one that allows them to commune better with the natural environment.

"As excited as we are with

the first Inaugural flight we will continue to work with the people of Rota, Mayor Joseph S. Inos and the Marianas Visitors Authority in promoting 'Nature Treasure Island' Rota and the rest of the CNMI."

He added that so impressed were passengers of the inaugural flight with the natural and beauty of Rota that they themselves were conscious about throwing garbage on the island.

"One of the themes for the Rota trip is to entice the protection of the nature and its environment. While tourists enjoy the nature of Rota, some

brought their garbage back to Japan, such as empty cans and bottles," he said.

The 40 Rota charter flights

Flame Tree arts fest organizers are grateful for Coke donations

The Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture, which organized the 27th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, has expressed gratitude to Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia) Inc. for making donations that contributed to the success of Micronesia's biggest cultural event.

Cecilia Taitano-Celes, CCAC executive director, said that Coca-Cola gave 18 cases of soda, 40 cooler bags with six cans of Nestea soda in it, and five banners.

"We are very grateful for the gracious sponsorship and contribution of Coca-Cola. The beverages provided, as well as cooler bags and banners helped us defray many expenses in these issues. The drinks were contributed to the hardworking committee members who worked day and night and put in long hours to ensure a successful Flame Tree Arts Festival," Celes said.

She said that Coca-Cola has been a consistent sponsor of the arts festival through the years.

"Coca-Cola has, for many years now, sponsored our festival. Coca-Cola has continued to generously provide us with their patronage and support. Are we looking forward to Coca-Cola's sponsorship next year? Of course, and for many years to come," Celes said.

Johnnie Fong, Coca-Cola Micronesia managing director, said that sponsoring community events like the Flame Tree Arts Festival is part of the company's commitment to help support the celebration of the local culture.

"We have been providing donations to the Flame Tree Arts Festival over time. This speaks to our dedication toward the

preservation of the local art and tradition, even as we celebrate cultural diversity in our community," Fong said.

Celes said this year's event was overwhelming. She said the turnout was "very, very successful."

"Our vendor booths were filled to the maximum. We were joined this year by 20 food vendors, 20 arts-in-education booths and demonstrators, 55 local artists, and the Saipan Farmers Sabalu market.

"In a nutshell, the festival was successful and was much bigger than last year's," Celes said.

The 27th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival was held from April 24 to 27 at the Kilili Beach Park in Susupe, and was planned around the theme, "Showcase our Inheritance," which emphasized the importance and significance of each culture, tradition and way of life in the CNMI.

The event showcased arts and crafts, and local traditions such as canoe building, sea-salt making, coconut oil processing, mwar mwar making, hot pepper processing, sea shell jewelry, weaving through the use of *pandanus* and coconut leaves, and sand painting. Approximately 50 bands, individual performers, and cultural groups delivered fine performances to liven up the crowd throughout the festival.

The Flame Tree Arts Festival is Micronesia's biggest and longest-running annual cultural event.

For more information about the local distribution of Coca-Cola, visit <http://www.kospn.com>. (PR)

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy 48th birthday to my dad, Nelson C. Edpao of Sinapalo Rota, who is celebrating his birthday today. Thanks for being a great dad! We're proud of you and we love you! Greetings come from your daughter Grace, sons Glenn and Genel Edpao and Mama.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manglona grants Miura another extension

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona yesterday vacated her earlier order that set the briefing schedule for Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura to file his petition for habeas corpus.

Fire burns canoe behind museum

A fire damaged a canoe that was placed behind the CNMI Museum in Garapan early Thursday morning.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said yesterday that no one was reported injured in the blaze that was contained at 4:10am.

Ogumoro said that, according to arson investigators, there were no obvious damage to the

Manglona issued the decision after Miura's counsel, Bruce Berline, and chief prosecutor Jeffery L. Warfield Sr. signed yesterday a stipulation for Miura to get another extension to file the petition.

In granting the stipulation, the judge ordered that the hearing on the petition for

habeas corpus, presently set for May 28, 2008 at 1:30pm, is taken off calendar.

Manglona instead changed the May 28 hearing on the petition to a regular status conference.

The judge ordered the parties in the case to appear on May 18 at 1:30pm for the

tus conference.

On Thursday, Berline's co-counsel, Mark Hanson, disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* that they want another extension to file the petition for habeas corpus in challenging the extradition case filed against Miura.

Hanson said they wanted to see the outcome of the California hearing that was set for May 9.

Last March 19, Manglona granted Miura's request for a month to file the petition for habeas corpus. The judge gave Miura's counsel no later than April 10 to file the petition.

Berline and Warfield, however, later agreed to request the court to extend the briefing schedule for the petition, opposition and reply.

The parties requested that

the base of a dead tree, which stood next to the canoe in the museum's compound.

The fire smoldered the core of the tree, causing it to collapse. The smoldering tree's core made contact with the canoe, triggering the fire.

"The cause of the fire is known; however, this case is pending further investigation," Ogumoro said. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Underwater archaeology lecture on Monday

The public is invited to attend a lecture titled "2008 Underwater Archaeological Survey of the Saipan Invasion Beaches: The Latest News from the Field" which will be begin at 6pm on Monday, May 5, at the Visitors Center Theater, American Memorial Park.

Archaeologists Jason Burns and Michael Krivor of Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. will present the preliminary results of an un-

derwater survey they recently completed under contract with the CNMI Division of Historic Preservation.

The survey targeted the waters off the western coast of Saipan including those adjacent to the World War II invasion beaches stretching from Aagingan Point to Quartermaster Road.

These beaches and the adjacent lagoon were designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. National

Park Service in 1985.

Burns and Krivor will show photographs of the various historic resources that were located during their survey including World War II-era ships and airplanes. They will also answer questions from the audience.

The lecture, co-sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities and the Division of Historic Preservation, is open to the public and free of charge. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Archaeologist Jason Burns of Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. checks out a submerged relic of World War II for an underwater survey he and Michael Krivor recently completed under contract with the CNMI Division of Historic Preservation.

Mechanical problem at power plant triggers rotating outages

A mechanical problem at Power Plant 1 in Lower Base triggered another round of rotating outages on Saipan yesterday.

The load shedding began at 12:03pm when CUC was unable to generate sufficient electrical power to meet the island's demand after a mechanical problem occurred on Engine No. 6.

CUC acting power division manager Gary Camacho said the problem affected the performance of the engine.

"Therefore, additional power demand from other areas of the grid was required to be taken offline," he said. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

shut down and the Power Plant I initiated load shedding at 12:03pm," Camacho said.

Camacho said that, although Power Plant 1 operators made all efforts to include only areas identified in CUC's contingent load shedding schedule that was previously released, it was not possible due to the amount of production loss and the extent of the repair.

"Therefore, additional power demand from other areas of the grid was required to be taken offline," he said. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

"To prevent further damage to the unit it was immediately

the petition be due on or before May 2, 2008. Manglona granted the request on April 17.

The 60-year-old Miura was arrested by Saipan authorities at the Saipan International Airport on Feb. 22 in connection with

the murder of his wife, Kazumi Miura, in L.A. in 1981.

Miura had already been convicted in Japan in 1994 of the crime. The verdict, however, was overturned by Japan's high court 10 years ago.

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BLUNT

From Page 1

Fitial said the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. was on track to becoming self-sustaining "until the Legislature intervened."

According to the governor, CUC cannot pay for the skyrocketing cost of fuel because of four CUC measures that the Legislature made law by overriding his vetoes. One particular piece of legislation that had affected CUC's cash flow is Public Law 15-94, which substantially reduced the electric rates and charges for residential customers.

"I vetoed this legislation because I feared it would drive CUC into insolvency. As a result of these laws, CUC is presently operating at a deficiency of \$1.2 million a month. It was unable to find money to pay for a full shipment of

fuel in April. There are no funds available in the Commonwealth to subsidize CUC," said the governor.

He added that since the new Legislature convened in January, the administration had asked it to repeal the power rates rollback. After much going back and forth, the repeal cleared the Legislature this week. The governor said he would sign the bill promptly.

Credit and blame

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, who authored the rollback legislation and eventually sponsored the bill to repeal it, said the Legislature "takes credit and blame for the bill," which offered temporary relief to the customers at CUC's expense.

Palacios said the governor was not free of fault either. He pointed out that the bill called for regulated power rates. But this was not done because the ad-

ministration took long in appointing people to the Public Utilities Commission.

Senate President Pete P. Reyes also took offense at the governor's comments. "The governor had over a year to submit names for PUC, but he didn't do it until recently. Everybody should take blame for [CUC's problems]," he said.

Last month, three PUC appointees were sworn into office, enough to provide a quorum and to get organized. Fitial said he would propose candidates for the two remaining positions in the near future.

Plant upgrade

The governor announced the nearing completion of maintenance and repair at Saipan's main power plant. Thanks to a \$6.5-million grant from the U.S. Interior Department's Office of Insular Affairs, the power plant's capacity will

increase from 28.7 to 81.2 megawatts in six months.

"When this work is done, CUC will be able to produce electricity up to 90 percent of its capacity—an efficiency level not seen for many years," he said.

He renewed his commitment to the privatization of CUC. But before CUC can be privatized, he said, the government needs to complete the rehabilitation of the power plant and draft a fair request for proposals.

The governor also reported that more than a dozen firms had expressed their interest in submitting proposals for alternative energy sources. The deadline for submission of proposals is May 16, 2008.

Upbeat

Fitial offered an upbeat assessment of the economy, citing foreign invest-

ments, new flight service, the planned military buildup on Guam, and expedited drawdown of federal funds for capital improvement projects.

He also said the CNMI's share about \$16.1-million share of the federal economic stimulus package should increase government revenue. But this will not be enough to offset the government's projected shortfall for the current fiscal year.

To avoid deficit spending, cost cutting measures will continue, he said.

The governor's speech also touched on federal issues such as minimum wage hikes and immigration federalization. He reiterated his call for Congress to offset the impact of the wage hikes with a \$15-million financial aid. As for federalization, he said he "will not make any final decision on the commonwealth's response until the legislative process is finished."

BUSINESSES

From Page 1

yesterday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Lawmakers were, however, more unforgiving.

Chamber president James T. Arenovski said the islands' chief executive hit the nail on the head when he said that one of the most pressing issues that need to be addressed is the Commonwealth's dire power situation.

He said the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s problems—blackouts and high cost of power—is in a way graver than the issues on federalization of CNMI immigration and impending minimum wage increase.

The Chamber president said that without reliable power, current businesses on the islands cannot survive, much less new companies coming in

to invest.

Arenovski also lauded the governor for making a move to have the federal government set aside \$30 million for financial aid for both the CNMI and American Samoa.

He said the \$15 million each jurisdiction would receive is a start, especially if the second round of minimum wage increase pushes through as scheduled on May 25.

For her part, Hotel of the Northern Mariana Islands chair Lynn A. Knight said the SOCA delivered by the governor was powerful and realistic.

"I was impressed to learn about the significant cost-savings that has occurred in the tune of many millions of dollars. I also didn't realize the government had downsized by so many personnel. This is difficult, but certainly necessary."

She also urged everyone to band to-

gether and help the administration during these tough times.

"We should all be concerned about the state of the Commonwealth economy and everyone needs to pitch in to help. We are not in the clear with our economy by any means, but it is apparent that the self-discipline is making a difference."

'Fluffy'

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios called the governor's assessment of the state of the Commonwealth "fluffy."

"It was not as candid as I would have wanted it to be," said the speaker.

He also said that the economic developments cited by the governor were a rehash of his previous report.

Rep. Diego T. Benavente, a part of a gubernatorial tandem that ran opposite Fitial and Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez in 2005, said the lack of applause

or standing ovations seen in previous SOCAs showed the public's disappointment with the administration.

"He won the election on a claim that he knew where to find the revenue. All of this talk about [personnel and pay] cuts, all of the finger-pointing—we would not have come to this if he did what he promised to do," Benavente said.

Realistic

Former Chamber president and local businessman Tony Pellegrino, meanwhile, said he was very pleased with Washington Representative's Pete A. Tenorio's speech.

"I think...Tenorio gave a very realistic address of the situation we are in. He knows the pulse of the U.S. government. He is the only one in the government that is stating that it is about time we change our attitude

away from what we have been thinking and doing in the past."

He agreed with Tenorio that going against the U.S. Congress on the CNMI federalization issue would not put the CNMI in good stead.

"The U.S. will drag the CNMI into the future. We cannot keep looking back at what was. The age of cheap labor is gone. We, the citizens of the CNMI, must become our own workers. We must become educated and skilled workers. That is our only true asset."

Pellegrino added, "We cannot use other people to do our work. Recall that the governor said that 75 percent of our labor is nonresident. What are the residents doing? Sitting down watching the show? Or collecting food stamps? Last year over 8,400 people collected food stamps. I am glad that federalization is now upon us. Perhaps we will wake up." (Agnes E. Donato)

PETE

From Page 1

have supported the bill if it did not include special provisions on the tourist visa waiver program, exemption from temporary work visa caps, protection for foreign investors, the transitional CNMI-only guest worker program, and special consideration for student visas.

The immigration bill has been passed by both houses of Congress. It will become law once signed by President George W. Bush.

The Fitial administration and the private sector have warned that the bill would further hurt the CNMI's struggling economy. They believe that a

federalized immigration system would make it difficult for the CNMI to hire alien workers to fill jobs in the islands. They also fear the CNMI will lose its edge as a destination for Russian and Chinese tourists.

The federalization of the local immigration system, Tenorio noted, has been one of the most bitterly debated issues in CNMI history. He expressed regret about the division that the bill had created in the community and the economic anxiety it had caused the government and the businesses.

Even his personal relationships were not spared by the debate over federalization, Tenorio said.

"Frankly, at times, because of my strong position on this issue, I felt like I

am a stranger among friends and political colleagues when on island," he said.

But he added that he did what he believed ought to be done. "I knew I had to take decisive leadership and participate in the process because without input from the CNMI, I believe that any attempt to federalize CNMI's immigration could have disastrous consequences," he said.

Judging by the governor's State of the Commonwealth Address, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has no intent to make nice with Tenorio.

He took a swipe at Tenorio for allegedly failing to communicate the CNMI's needs in the nation's capital. "During the last eight years, we have done a dismal job in Washington

in educating members of Congress and their staffs about the Commonwealth—its location, history, and needs," said Fitial.

Tenorio represented the CNMI in Washington for the past six years.

Fitial added: "During the past 16 months, representatives of the business community and my administration have met with representatives of more than 45 members of Congress. Time and time again, they were told that these offices (and members) had never heard of the commonwealth. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that we were not able to muster any significant support in dealing with our minimum wage and immigration issues."

The governor also said the CNMI

government in the future must do better in forging ongoing relationships with congressional members and their staffs.

He said that having delegate in Congress may help, "if we elect someone who has the energy and ability to put into the new job."

Tenorio has come out publicly about his interest in the delegate position.

A lawmaker, who has also supported federalization, said Fitial's attacks on Tenorio were uncalled for. "The governor was very unfair toward Pete A. If the resident representative had not taken a middle-ground position on federalization, the bill would not have turned out the way it had," said Rep. Tina Sablan.

REPORTERS'

From Page 1

tried to use a shortcut but were "ushered" the right way by members of the Legislative Bureau staff.

■■■

Like last year, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial began his speech by calling for a moment of silence to honor the 10 Northern Marianas soldiers who have died in the Iraqi war. He recited the names of the four who have been added to the list since his last State of the Commonwealth Address: PFC John Derek Flores, CPL Victor M. Fontanilla, CPL Joe Junior Gogue Charfauros, and Seaman Ana Marie SN. Camacho.

■■■

The governor, toward the end of his

speech, made a pointed comment on Tenorio's work in the nation's capital. Fitial said, "During the last eight years, we have done a dismal job in Washington in educating members of Congress and their staffs about the Commonwealth—its location, history, and needs. During the past 16 months, representatives of the business community and my administration have met with representatives of more than 45 members of Congress. Time and time again, they were told that these offices (and members) had never heard of the commonwealth."

His comment elicited uncomfortable chuckles from the crowd, including Tenorio, who has represented the CNMI in Washington for six of those eight years.

The governor's speech took 33 minutes, about half as long as last year's. Tenorio's address lasted 31 minutes.

■■■

Unlike in previous State of the Commonwealth Address, not much clapping happened at yesterday's SOCA. In fact, only two rounds of applause occurred when Gov. Benigno R. Fitial delivered his address.

The first was when Fitial asked the audience to clap for Kumho Asiana executives who attended the ceremony. The last one was when the governor concluded his speech.

■■■

Fitial never mentioned the phrase "Better Times" in his SOCA yesterday. "Better Times" was Fitial and Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez's campaign slogan when they ran for election. The

governor mentioned that slogan in his past two SOCAs.

■■■

Many people in the audience expected Gov. Fitial to disclose the administration's plan about the expected signing by President Bush into law the federalization bill. The governor, however, only mentioned three options.

■■■

Many seats were left vacant during yesterday's event, a stark contrast from the traditionally difficult seating during SOCA events of the past years. Many chairs plastered with "reserved" notices were unoccupied.

■■■

Former Rep. Candido B. Taman sang both the U.S. and CNMI National Anthems, while Fr. Isaac Ayuyu delivered the invocation.

■■■

The Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Hall's air-conditioning units were on full blast eliciting complaints from some in attendance. Some women covered up with sweaters while others retreated to the warmer parts of the venue, away from the air-conditioning units.

■■■

Taotao Tano president Greg Cruz was present during the SOCA, along with his wife and daughter who gave her dad a hand by filming the proceedings from time to time with a mini cam. Cruz wore a black T-shirt with the local advocacy group's name on the back.

■■■

For the second year in a row, no food or beverage was served for attendees of the event. (Agnes E. Donato, Mark Rabago, and Ferdie dela Torre)

NMI to be included in DOD Economic Program

CNMI Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio announced yesterday that a vital amendment to Department of Defense Programs has been introduced. Sponsored by Guam Rep. Mad-

eline Bordallo, H.R. 5931, the Joint Guam Projects Oversight Act, includes a section that pro-

poses to include the CNMI and the Virgin Islands in the authorizing legislation for the Office of Economic Adjustment.

The OEA is responsible for the planning, directing, coordinating and managing of DoD economic adjustment programs for communities, areas, and states adversely affected by DoD realignment actions. It also assists local communities, areas, or states with special impact assistance in expanding public service facilities to meet requirements generated by major expansions or the establishment of new DoD installations.

"This is a major step forward

The section is also included in the 2009 Defense Authorization bill that is currently under consideration by House Armed Services Committee.

"OEA grants will be essential for repairs to Tinian's harbor and other infrastructure to support DOD's plans for use of their land. I am very thankful to the Tinian Delegation and Phil Long for bringing this need to my attention," said Tenorio. (PR)

Local man emblazons support for federalization in a banner

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A local Saipan resident and former special projects coordinator for the Department of Public Works paraded around yesterday morning with a poster board bearing his full support for federalization.

Upon learning that the U.S. House of Representatives had approved Senate bill 2739, Joseph M. Mendiola went right to work on his banner, flaunting his support for federalization.

Mendiola visited the *Saipan Tribune* office holding up his poster. He said he also visited the Horiguchi Building, the Microl intersection, and the *Marianas Variety*.

"I am just overjoyed. I could not sleep. I've long said this since 1982. I've advised, informed, and reminded the politicians that with the continuous labor and immigration system [issues], federalization will eventually prevail," Mendiola said.

He claims that he had predicted in 1982 all that has been happening with federalization, labor and immigration, and the phasing out of garment factories.

"Things I've predicted in 1982 are happening already. I will tell you now that I predict that the poker industry on Saipan will eventually collapse, followed by the Retirement Fund. It's going to happen. Trust me," said Mendiola.

He said one reason why he is in full support of federalization is because he has always had faith in it—that he predicted it and that it will happen.

"Fuel, water, schools, food



Joseph M. Mendiola shows off the poster board he made expressing his full support for federalization.

stamp, typhoon disaster relief aids, or any other kinds of relief that comes into the CNMI comes from the federal," Mendiola said.

He said he has numerous families and friends who share the same belief that "with all the issues with labor and immigration and the constant changing of policies throughout the years, there is no consistency. Once the law is set, they should be set. The law is the law. It should stay the way it is."

Mendiola said with federalization, all illegal aliens "will be flushed out. This will benefit everybody and I will welcome anybody who wants to come to the CNMI with good intentions."

"Many don't understand this, but the United States is one of the most powerful nations in the world" in terms of "social, economical and political," Mendiola said. "So we should work with them, and not against them."

Mendiola also believes that Washington Representative Pete A. Tenorio, who has expressed an interest in the

new CNMI delegate position, should not be the first CNMI nonvoting delegate.

"It should be somebody who is much younger and who respects the contents of the Covenant, somebody like Robert Torres," Mendiola said.

The U.S. Congress' passing of Senate bill 2739 includes a provision to federalize immigration controls in the Northern Marianas. The bill also grants the Northern Marianas a delegate with limited voting powers in the U.S. House.

Once enacted, an election will be held in November for the first CNMI delegate that would coincide with the U.S. general election.

The measure now heads to the White House. Once the bill is received from Congress, President George W. Bush has 10 days to sign the bill into law.

Min a Jang
P.O. Box 501742
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 322-6875

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF) FCD AD
ADOPTION FOR:) CIVIL
A.C. AND Y.C.) ACTION
Minor Child) NO.
) 08-0205
by) NOTICE
MIN A JANG) OF
Petitioners) HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Adoption for the above-named minor child by Min A Jang Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Adoption will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before the Honorable Kenneth Govendo on the 15th day of May, 2008 at 9 A.M. or as soon as thereafter.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

in preparing for the relocation of marines to Guam from Okinawa. Even though DOD has not yet released their final plans for the relocation, it is important that the CNMI is eligible for these impact grants," said Tenorio. "I am thankful to... Bordallo for including this provision in her bill, and looking out for our interests."

LEAVING ISLAND GARAGE SALE EVERYTHING MUST GO Lots and lots of house hold stuff on Saturday May 3 and Sunday May 4

MOBIL SHELL

PIC

D&D STORE

X

Part-Time position available for our Saipan location. Applicant must have extensive knowledge of PCs. Position involves diagnosing and repairing personal computers and also customer service. Background in electronics a plus.

Computer Technician

Requirements:

- US permanent resident
- Must be able to lift heavy objects
- Friendly and self-motivated
- Excellent communication skills
- Dependable transportation



234-7368



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950



Invitation For Bid IFB 08-027

The Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase, delivery, and installation of **Computers and Accessories for William S. Reyes Elementary School**. Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-027" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office, no later than **May 30, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 08-027, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (one (1)-original and one (1)-copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl de la Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: **delacruze@pss.cnmi.mp**.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

**/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education**

**/S/ Carl F. de la Cruz
Acting P&S Officer**

Law firm sues ex-client for not paying attorney's fees

A law firm has sued its former client in a paternity and child support case for allegedly refusing to pay attorney's fees.

Pacific Lawyers, doing business as O'Connor Berman Dotts & Banes law office, sued Paula Sablan Hamilton for breach of contract and unjust enrichment.

Pacific Lawyers asked the Superior Court to order Hamilton to pay \$6,817.47 in general damages plus interest, additional attorney's fees, and court costs.

The plaintiff, through counsel George L. Hasselback, stated in the complaint that on Nov. 1, 2004, the law firm and Hamilton entered into an agreement for Pacific Lawyers to render legal services to Hamilton in a paternity and child support matter.

Hasselback said the legal representation continued through October 2005.

He said that Hamilton agreed to pay attorney's fees and costs incurred in the course of the legal representation.

The lawyer said the defendant also agreed to reimburse the law firm for all out-of-pocket expenses, including filing fees, court costs, travel expenses and duplication charges.

Hasselback said that Hamilton has defaulted on paying the June 8, 2005, payment and has not made a single payment under the promissory note.

As a result of the legal representation, he said, defendant incurred an unpaid balance in the amount of \$6,817.47. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

Hafa Adai!
CNN'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

By BENIGNO R. FITIAL
Special to the Saipan Tribune



State of the Commonwealth

Editor's Note: The following is the complete text of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's State of the Commonwealth Address delivered on May 2, 2008, at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe in a joint session of the 16th Legislature.

Before I begin my address, let us pause for a moment of silence to remember and honor our 10 fallen service members who have perished in the Iraqi war zone. Four have been added to the list since I spoke last year:

- PFC John Derek Flores
- CPL Victor M. Fontanilla
- CPL Joe Junior Gogue Charfauros
- Seaman AnaMarie SN. Camacho

The service and sacrifice of these young men and women will never be forgotten.

■ ■ ■

I am here today to report on the State of the Commonwealth. I will start with our economy, then review the government's response to our declining revenues, and conclude with a discussion of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and federal legislation.

The Commonwealth's Economy

Last year I talked about Kumho Asiana's ambitious plans for its LaoLao Bay Golf Resort. Yesterday I had great pleasure in attending the groundbreaking ceremony for this \$60 million luxury golf resort project. They are now on their way to build up to 120 high-end villas, and a new clubhouse and teahouse. These three drawings will give you some perspective on the venture. The first drawing is the entrance to the hotel in LaoLao. The next faces the green on the 18th hole with the hotel on the left side. The third drawing shows the view of the hotel from above the 18th hole.

The confidence of Kumho Asiana in the Commonwealth is reassuring evidence of our eventual economic recovery. Kumho Asiana is a multi-billion dollar conglomerate, with more than two dozen subsidiaries, and is now the fifth largest family-run company in South Korea.

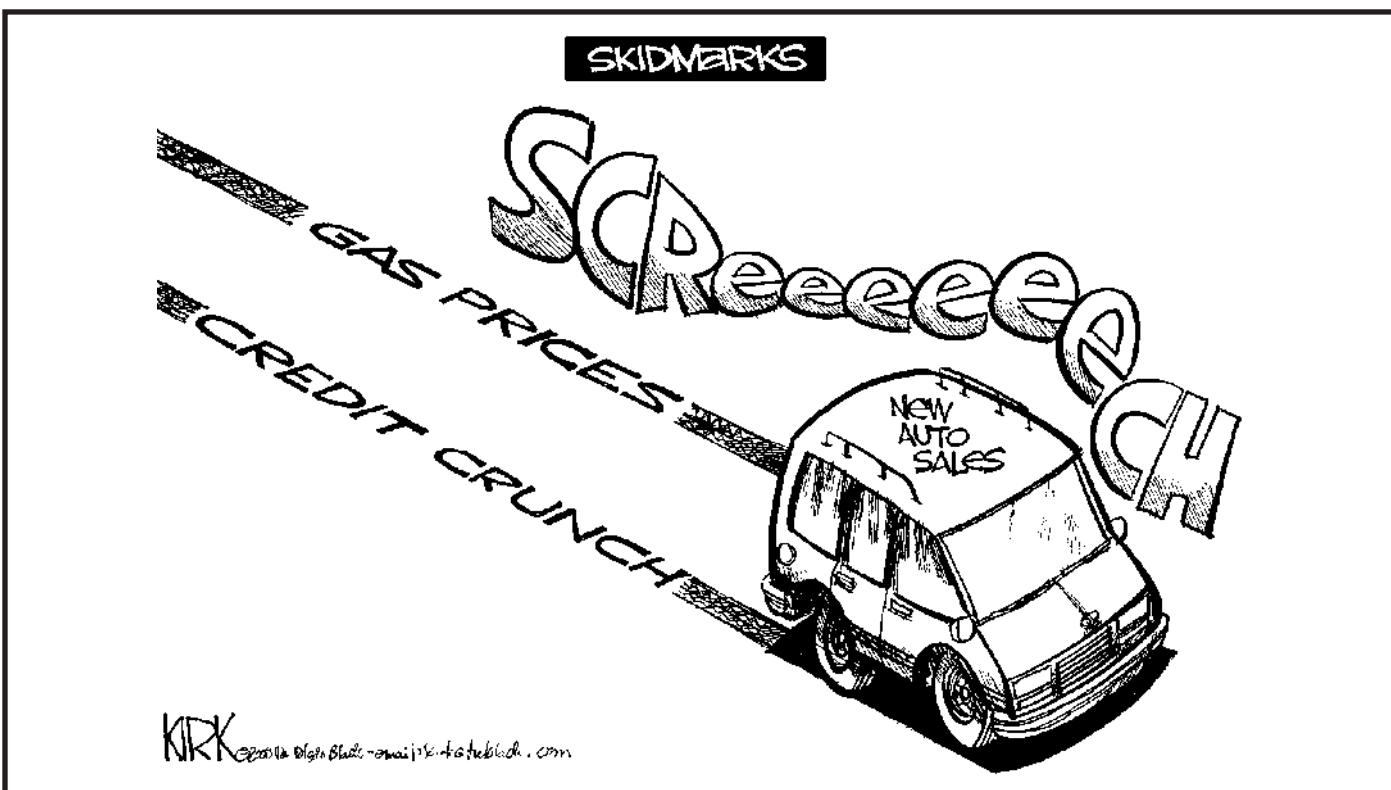
Our efforts to increase investment over the last two years have produced other successes as well.

Just a few days ago MRDC took an important step toward obtaining the permits necessary before construction can begin on its Tinian project. MRDC plans to build the 405-room hotel casino Matua Bay Resort on the island and a 18-hole championship golf course—at an estimated cost for the first phase of \$179 million. The company hired one of Japan's most distinguished architects to design the hotel casino resort. Here are some drawings reflecting his creativity. The round structure in front is the casino itself layered into several floors. The interior is a spacious innovative design.

The Bridge Investment Group recently announced that it has scheduled its groundbreaking ceremony for its project in June. When completed, the Tinian Oceanview Resort and Condominiums project will consist of a 301-room hotel and 268 condominium rooms at an estimated cost of \$40 to \$60 million.

Under its new owners, the former Nikko Hotel—now the Palms Resort Saipan—will undergo extensive renovations beginning early this summer. By focusing on one wing at a time, Palm Resorts Saipan plans to keep the hotel open during this period.

Our visitor industry is showing positive signs of fighting back



from the decline in arrivals last year. In December Northwest started a new daily daytime flight from Osaka to Saipan. By this one flight alone, we anticipate an increase of more than 20 percent in Japanese visitors during 2008.

Asiana last year added four additional daytime flights from Seoul to Saipan and, later in the year, added flights from Busan to Saipan four times a week. We have seen rapid, double digit growth in South Korean arrivals over the past two years and we expect more progress in the coming years.

I was very impressed to hear that the Rota community turned out in the early morning hours earlier this week to welcome the first of 40 charter flights from Japan to that island. These flights are sponsored by Kinki Nippon Tours and Continental Airlines. The Rota charter flights are fully booked, which will bring about 8,000 tourists to Rota.

We are continuing as well to develop the growing markets in both China and Russia. I am confident that visitor arrivals this year will be at least 15 percent greater than the arrivals in 2007, providing a needed boost for our hotels and other businesses catering to tourists.

Looking beyond next year, we hope that the Commonwealth will share in the economic benefits resulting from the military buildup on Guam. I have directed all CNMI agencies to cooperate fully with the different environmental studies of our islands being conducted by federal officials. We anticipate receiving a draft Master Plan for the CNMI later this year. We read in the media about possible military uses on Tinian, Pagan, the most northern islands, and recently Goat Island. The Lt. Governor and I believe that the military planners should discuss these issues with Commonwealth representatives before—not after—they formalize their draft Master Plan.

Our expedited drawdown of federal CIP funds will also contribute to improved economic activity in the next few years. Between January 2006, when this administration took office, and April 30, 2008, the Commonwealth drew down a total of \$51 million—46 percent of the cumulative balance available for our use. Within the next six months, we will be implementing about \$39 million of our CIP funds towards projects that will stimulate our economy. By Spring 2009, the CNMI will have an infrastructure plan in place to satisfy the requirements necessary to qualify for future water and waste water infrastructure funding from the federal government.

Response to Declining Government Revenues

Now let me turn to the serious problem of declining government revenues.

I have just received approval from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury for our plan to implement the federal stimulus legislation. As a result, the Commonwealth expects to receive about \$16.1 million to cover our payments to eligible CNMI residents. Under the law, tax rebates will be paid in the amount of \$600 per individual, \$1,200 for joint filers, and \$300 per eligible child. Our plan is to begin issuing the first batch of checks by the end of this month.

The Commonwealth Treasury will certainly welcome any increase in revenues due to this large infusion of cash into our economy. Even so, it is unlikely that this will be enough to offset the anticipated negatives for the current fiscal year.

It remains my strongly held view that this government should not engage in deficit financing. As shown by this chart, we have consis-

tently tried to keep our expenses in line with revenues. I regret that it looks as though we are unable to do that in the current fiscal year. We have been unable to reach agreement on an austerity program with the Legislature. We have tried to adjust to the declining revenues without reducing the essential public services in the CNMI. Let me illustrate some of the difficulties. The current projected expenditures in 2008 are \$171 million and that will have to be reduced. For 2009, the budget will be set at \$160 million. All three branches of government have lived with reduced funding in recent years. But the Executive Branch has been reduced the most. From expenses of \$109 million in 2005, the Executive Branch has been reduced to \$83 million for 2008—a reduction of nearly 25 percent.

We have tried to protect our most essential public services from significant reductions. But we have been able to do that only with respect to our public school system.

Looking ahead to fiscal 2009, the Executive Branch is reduced further from \$83 million to \$74 million. The Legislative Branch is allocated an increase in funding. In summary, we have made significant reductions in the Executive Branch, but we are trying to protect essential public services.

As a result of these budgetary decisions, we have reduced the number of government employees, especially in the Executive Branch. The number of employees in the government declined from 4,137 at the beginning of fiscal year 2006 to 3,216 at the end of fiscal year 2007 (last September)—a reduction of about 22 percent. We have reduced that number to about 3,116 in 2008.

Despite these limitations, I am proud of the way in which many agencies have stepped up to the challenge. Let me mention a few of them:

The Department of Labor is a totally new and impressive department. For the first time in nearly 15 years, it is current in the handling of labor cases. The status of nearly all foreign workers has now been determined and those that are not employed are being repatriated. The Department has a new computer system that upgrades its ability to keep track of all transactions in the foreign worker labor pool. It has a new website where our citizens can see what jobs are available. It has a new system for citizens to bring their complaints to the Labor Department. The enforcement of the new law has been vigorous but fair, and has produced immediate results. Foreign workers who try to enter the CNMI on phony documents are now put on a return plane home. Persons who do not have real businesses are being denied the right to hire a foreign worker.

The Department of Finance after months of difficult negotiations finally reached agreement with the Internal Revenue Service that resulted in the payment to the CNMI of \$26.4 million of income tax payments. The receipt of these funds enabled us to issue long overdue refund and rebate checks to our taxpayers in December 2007. For this year I am assured that refund and rebate checks due this year will be paid.

The Office of the Attorney General has established an Office of White Collar Prosecution staffed with two attorneys and four investigators. I supported the creation of this Office in order to emphasize our determination to prosecute government corruption. I recognize that developing these cases is often difficult, where they involve proof of criminal intent and eyewitnesses or participants are reluctant to testify. The new unit has had several successes to date— involving the Lawcare case, the Kagman High School Fraud, and the ongoing prosecution of a large-scale CUC billing scam. I expect

See STATE on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

STATE

From Page 6

more such prosecutions in the future.

The Northern Marianas College has a new president whose efforts I fully support. We are determined to help the college maintain its certification. I have dedicated \$380,000 to NMC to fund critical staff requirements and renovation and repairs. I am exploring a plan to leverage federal CIP funds so as to provide the needed operational funds for the college. During the past year, the college played a leading role in establishing the strategic workforce action team (SWAT) aimed at bringing together the agencies committed to providing more, and better, training for our young people ready to enter the workforce.

The Commonwealth Health Center opened its Center for Public Health and Dialysis—the most modern center of its kind in the Western Pacific. The Health Center was inspected and again certified by Medicare as providing quality healthcare. I am committed to the delivery of high quality, affordable healthcare services in the CNMI.

The Defined Contribution Plan for government employees has been in successful operation for more than a year. The plan now has more than 500 participants. We are committed to strengthening the Defined Benefit Plan. We have worked with the Retirement Fund and CDA to agree upon an initiative to authorize the issuance of pension obligation bonds. The proceeds from these bonds will reduce the government's unfunded liability to the Retirement Fund. I ask the Legislature to enact this initiative.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Now let's talk about CUC.

Current Rehabilitation of Power Plant Facilities

We are near the end of a rehabilitation project to address the serious maintenance and repair needs of our three power plants. We thank the Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs, for the \$6.5 million grant in mid-2007 to help us address the many problems of Power Plant 1.

CUC and its contractors have worked with a schedule defining the tasks and setting deadlines for the eight engines in Plant 1. As reflected by this chart, the completion date is set for September of this year. The red bars show pending rehabilitation. The green bars show completed work. The yellow bars show ongoing work. We are on schedule. With this program we will have increased the total megawatts from 28.7 to 81.2 in six months. When this work is done, CUC will be able to produce electricity up to 90 percent of its capacity—an efficiency level not seen for many years.

Fuel Costs and Customer Rates

We all know how fuel costs have increased over the past two years. At this time last year, the cost of a barrel of crude oil was about \$70. You can see from this chart that it is now approaching \$120. CUC was permitted under its charter to set rates that would reflect the increased cost of its fuel and did so until the Legislature intervened.

Last year the Legislature voted to override my vetoes of six proposed laws. Four of these bills negatively affected CUC's cash flow. The most important of these was Public Law 15-94, which substantially reduced the electric rates and charges for residential customers.

I vetoed this legislation because I feared it would drive CUC into insolvency. As a result of these laws, CUC is presently operating at a deficiency of \$1.2 million per month. It was unable to find money to pay for a full shipment of fuel in April. There are no funds available in the Commonwealth to subsidize CUC.

Since the new Legislature convened in January, we have urged it to repeal Public Law 15-94. The House of Representatives agreed with this approach. But the Senate declined to go along. I still believe that the quickest means of providing some relief to CUC is to repeal Public Law 15-94. I appreciate the recent action of the Legislature in passing Bill No. 16-79, which provides for a six month suspension of Public Law 15-94. I plan to sign this bill promptly.

Action by the Public Utilities Commission

Three of the five members of the Public Utilities Commission have been appointed, enough to provide a quorum and to get organized. I will be proposing candidates for the two additional positions in the near future.

The Commission has authority under its statute to provide interim rate relief. The CUC is now in the process of preparing a request for rate relief that is needed to put the agency back on an economically sustainable basis. It could be filed as early as next week.

The Commission is an independent agency. It will make its own determination of what evidence must be provided to support a reasoned and appropriate decision. The agency is authorized to retain such professional assistance as it needs to do the job. I am confident that the members will perform their tasks with distinction and expedition.

Short-term Needs of CUC

CUC has serious short-term cash needs even if relief is provided by the Legislature or by the Commission. Appropriations are needed to assist CUC over the next three or four months. The Secretary of Finance and I will be conferring with the Legislature about how best to achieve that objective.

Privatization of CUC

Privatization of CUC still remains one of my important objectives. But I recognize that certain steps need to be taken before we can seriously revisit the privatization question. First, we need to complete the rehabilitation program and make certain it has achieved its goals. Second, we need to consider further a performance management contract as a useful first step in professionalizing our management of the utility. Third, we need to make certain that we produce a RFP that addresses all of the problems identified by the Public Auditor in upholding the protest to our last RFP on this subject.

Lastly, we need to persuade the Legislature that privatization must be presented in a way that ensures all qualified candidates a fair and equal chance at success. In that connection, I believe that there is no place in such a process for preferences for local concerns. I would like to see the Legislature eliminate all such preferences across the board, but certainly in any privatization effort involving the critical services now performed by CUC.

Alternative Energy Sources

We have an RFP outstanding with respect to alternative energy sources. More than a dozen companies have expressed their interest in submitting proposals across a wide range of green technologies—wind, solar, biodiesel, ocean waves, and geothermal. The present schedule provides for submission of proposals by May 16, 2008. We believe that this RFP can withstand any protest and look forward to having the various proposals evaluated carefully and professionally.

Federal Legislation

During the past year I have spent much of my time in dealing with the federal proposals relating to minimum wage and immigration in the Commonwealth—as a witness in three congressional hearings and in many meetings with members of Congress and their staffs to explain our position on the issues.

I was greatly assisted in these efforts by the Commonwealth's business community. I would like to thank the former and current presidents of the Chamber of Commerce—Juan Pan Guerrero and Jim Arenovski—for their willingness to step up to this challenge and represent their members so ably. In addition, I would like to thank Lynn Knight, president of the Hotel Association of the NMI, for her dedicated contributions on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Let me briefly summarize where we stand.

Minimum Wage

When Congress increased federal wage levels nationwide last year, it directed that the Secretary of Labor file a report in early 2008 examining the impact of a second 55-cent increase scheduled for May 2008 for American Samoa and the Commonwealth. The Department's report was based on the best available data. It concluded that "it seems likely that the current economic decline may be made worse" with any future minimum wage increase for the CNMI.

Members of the Senate Energy Committee have supported the deferral of this increase, both during and after the hearings on February 28, 2008, in which I testified. However, deferral has been opposed by both Senator Kennedy and Representative Miller. In a letter to the Secretary of Labor, they were very critical of the department's report. In particular, they complained about the lack of reliable data to support the department's conclusions regarding likely injury to the economies of the Commonwealth and American Samoa. In light of this opposition, we are not optimistic about obtaining this deferral.

As an alternative, I have developed, along with my good friend, Congressman Faleomavaega of American Samoa, a program for economic relief for both insular areas. It is our way of dealing with our current economic problems and to offset the likely consequences of a second increase in the minimum wage level. We have asked the Appropriations Committee to support an amendment to provide \$15 million each to the Commonwealth and to American Samoa.

We do not know what the eventual outcome will be in the Appropriations Committee. But we have done our very best to protect the Commonwealth's interests.

I intend to pursue these issues with Interior Secretary Kempthorne. We will ask the Secretary to obtain funds to conduct regular and detailed studies of the economic factors affecting the insular areas—the same kind of economic studies that are available to every state and local community on the mainland and in Puerto Rico. Without such reliable data, we will never be able to counter criticisms like those from Senator Kennedy and Representative Miller regarding the Department of Labor report.

Immigration and Labor Legislation

The House of Representatives approved Senate Bill 2739 a few days ago—on April 29, 2008. It now goes to the President for signature. I will not make any final decision on the Commonwealth's response until the legislative process is finished.

The legislation in its present form is far more damaging to the Commonwealth than the proposals that were originally considered by the Senate and House Committees. We continue to believe that the legislation will do serious damage to our economy—increasing the likelihood that we will remain in an economic depression for many years to come.

In any situation like this, there are three courses of action that can be pursued individually or simultaneously—litigation, negotiations regarding the regulations, or seeking new legislation. I am in the process of consulting with the Legislature, the business community, the indigenous community, and other interested parties about these options.

Many have urged me to challenge the federal legislation in court. They are concerned about its impact on our economy, where about 75 percent of our workforce consists of foreign workers. They do not believe that this legislation is authorized by the Covenant. They believe that it denies our right of self-government over our local economy and workforce. They believe it is contrary to the U.S. Constitution, because no local community on the mainland has been, or could be, subjected to such controls over its local economy.

We all know that litigation is a difficult and controversial alternative. There is both vigorous support and articulate opposition to this course of action in the community. I respect this range of views.

The second option is preparing to participate to the fullest extent in the drafting the regulations implementing the new law. We cannot afford to sit back and wait for the federal agencies to solicit our opinion regarding the regulations.

One group has already responded to this challenge. Representatives from Guam and the CNMI have joined forces in the new Marianas Integrated Immigration Task Force. The members represent the visitor industry bureaus and the hotel associations of both communities, joined by Mel Gray, director of the CNMI Division of Immigration. They are concentrating on the law's provisions for a joint visa waiver program in which both Guam and the CNMI can participate. Unless the regulations implementing these provisions are drafted in a sensible manner, neither Guam nor the Commonwealth will be able to develop the full potential of the Chinese tourist market.

I welcome the plan of the Chamber of Commerce to establish a committee of its members to undertake a similar task, with a focus on the foreign worker provisions of the new law. The goal is to ensure, to the extent possible, that the legislation as implemented will do as little damage to the CNMI as possible.

The third option—amending this legislation—should become available when the Congress considers immigration reform for the nation. This is likely to happen next year with a new Administration and a new Congress. We believe that the unique problems of this small island community—and its unique guest worker program—will be better understood by the immigration experts in the Judiciary Committees of the two houses of Congress than was the case in the shaping of the legislation that was just approved by the Congress.

A Lesson for the Future

Our experience with Congress during the past 16 months produces one important message for the Commonwealth.

During the last eight years we have done a dismal job in Washington in educating members of Congress and their staffs about the Commonwealth—its location, history, and needs. During the past 16 months, representatives of the business community and my administration have met with representatives of more than 45 members of Congress. Time and time again, they were told that these offices (and the members) had never heard of the Commonwealth. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that we were not able to muster any significant support in dealing with our minimum wage and immigration issues.

We must do better in the future. We must assign a higher priority to ongoing relationships with members of Congress and their staffs. We cannot afford to relax and respond only when an emergency arises. It may be that having a Delegate in Congress will help address this problem, if we elect someone who has the energy and ability to put into the new job. But the problem is larger than any one person. This November a new Congress will be elected. We need to be ready with a program for welcoming the newcomers to Washington and for educating them about our Commonwealth.

Conclusion

We are a strong and resilient community. We have taken many major blows over the past few years. I intend to face our challenges during the next year with only one goal in mind—to protect the interests of this Commonwealth and achieve the potential envisioned by the Covenant.

Thank you.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲86° ▾76°

▲86° ▾77°

▲86° ▾76°

▲86° ▾76°

▲86° ▾75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲89 ▾77
Palau	TStorms	▲85 ▾78
Yap	TStorms	▲86 ▾77
Chuuk	TStorms	▲88 ▾77
Pohnpei	TStorms	▲84 ▾75
Kosrae	TStorms	▲88 ▾75
Majuro	TStorms	▲84 ▾75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲60 ▾53
Beijing	TShowers	▲79 ▾62
Hong Kong	TStorms	▲85 ▾78
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲84 ▾72
London	Showers	▲64 ▾50
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲74 ▾55
Manila	TStorms	▲90 ▾78
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲61 ▾50
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲82 ▾71
New York	Showers	▲61 ▾52
Osaka	Sunny	▲73 ▾62
Paris	Cloudy	▲69 ▾54
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲82 ▾58
Rome	Cloudy	▲74 ▾56
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲60 ▾38
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲62 ▾48
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲77 ▾54
Tokyo	Rain	▲69 ▾62
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲71 ▾55

Tides

Saipan Harbor	
5:27AM Today	High Tide: 2.0 Feet
12:09PM Today	Low Tide: 0.2 Feet
6:24PM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

	Today	5:53AM	6:35PM	Today	3:38AM	4:16PM
Sunday	5:52AM	6:35PM		Sunday	4:21AM	5:16PM
Monday	5:52AM	6:36PM		Monday	5:08AM	6:20PM
Tuesday	5:51AM	6:36PM		Tuesday	6:01AM	7:28PM
Wednesday	5:51AM	6:36PM		Wednesday	7:00AM	8:37PM

Moonrise/Moonset

	Today	5:53AM	6:35PM	Today	3:38AM	4:16PM
Sunday	5:52AM	6:35PM		Sunday	4:21AM	5:16PM
Monday	5:52AM	6:36PM		Monday	5:08AM	6:20PM
Tuesday	5:51AM	6:36PM		Tuesday	6:01AM	7:28PM
Wednesday	5:51AM	6:36PM		Wednesday	7:00AM	8:37PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

■ ISLAND SNAPSHOT Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

TRAVELOGUE

Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747.

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 8, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO 9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily

CO 9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6

CO 9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota

CO 9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily

CO 9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily

CO 9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily

CO 9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078 8:40am 2:00pm Daily via Nagoya

NW 075 4:45pm 7:25pm Daily Nagoya

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily

Saipan-Manila

CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6

CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604 2:20am 6:00am 1

OZ 604 2:50am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7

OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap

CO 891 6:00am 10:30am and Koror

CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6

CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7

CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror

CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily

PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guangzhou

CZ 3008 5:00am 8:00am 2,6

Guam-Hongkong

CO 909 6

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral

Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center

Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish

Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish

Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish

Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota

Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish

Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish

Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish

Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios

Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad

Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan

Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8:10:30pm

Saturday Tagalog Service: 8:10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am

Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7:30pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan

Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan

Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan

Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am

Youth Sunday School: 9am

English Worship Service Sunday: 10am

Sunday Service: 5:30pm

Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm

Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm

Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;

Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm

Mid-week Service: 7:30pm

Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm

Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30pm

Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion

9:00am

Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,

Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan

Worship Service: 9am

GBI Classes: 4-6pm

Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am

Sunday: 7am

Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm

Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan

Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)

Thursday: 5:30am (English): 7:45 pm (English)

Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog): 7:45pm (Tagalog)

Sunday: 6:45am (English)

Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church

Koblerville

Sunday Services

9:00 AM

Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral

on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158

Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)

Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal

8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

MAY 3, 1999

\$24M CIP projects OK'd

The House of Representatives passed on Friday the administration-sponsored appropriation bill for a new batch of Capital Improvement Projects, changing only one provision so that it will waive a requirement for each local delegation to set aside municipal funds for respective projects. The amendment in effect will remove a layer of bureaucracy in the allocation of funds, helping fast-track the use of the CIP money, which has been left idle for the last three years due to inability of the CNMI government to meet the matching requirement on federal grants.

Lack of funds puts MVA campaign in limbo

Due to tight budget, there is no way the Marianas Visitors Authority would be able to carry out additional promotional campaigns or even new projects for this fiscal year. According to board chairman Dave M. Sablan, the fiscal year 1999 budget for promotion has been drastically reduced due to the 13.4 percent cut on the \$7 million appropriation with Japan getting the biggest share amounting to \$1.9 million.

NMC Board adopts rules for aid

The Board of Regents adopted the new set of rules to govern the Spring 1999 Supplemental Grant designed to benefit qualified students of the Northern Marianas College, including recipients of Pell grant. During a board meeting Friday, fiscal committee chairman Ramon Villagomez said students who are not getting Pell grant and are carrying less than 12 credits will receive \$90 for each credit. Those students with 12 to 15 credits will be given \$1,000 for the entire semester, while those carrying the load higher than 15 credits can expect \$1,100 supplemental grant.

MAY 3, 2000

Bombs impede clearing of Puerto Rico dumpsite

Leveling the Puerto Rico dumpsite would not only be costly, but also dangerous due to "strong possibility" that military bombs and explosive ordnance are buried underneath the 50-foot high trash, according to officials. This developed as the Solid Waster Task Force briefed members of the Legislature yesterday on the status of the Marpi landfill which is envisioned to replace and finally close the current dumping ground considered by many as an eyesore.

US lawyers to assess PCB damage

The Texas-based lawyers assisting Tanapag residents for the planned class action suit over the polychlorinated biphenyl contamination in the village will still determine the amount of damages they hope to demand from the U.S. government. Rep. Dino M. Jones, chair of the House Natural Resources Committee who is spearheading the petition for filing of the complaint in court, said they have no idea yet how much money will be involved in the case.

Bank loans shrink to \$288-M

Bank loans shrunk 0.5 percent to \$288.3 million in the last quarter of 1999 compared with the same period the previous year, according to statistics obtained from the Banking Division of the commerce department. Although there is a growing demand for cash due to the worsening economic condition, officials said banks have taken a more conservative approach in their dealings with loan application because of the borrowers' weakened ability to pay back.

MAY 3, 2001

Gov't: \$10K to fight crimes 'not bad'

Despite existing austerity measures instituted due to depleted coffers, the Commonwealth government sole-sourced the hiring of former FBI officer Phil Goodwin as consultant to the anti-crime task force. In justifying the need for Mr. Goodwin's services, the administration pointed out the urgency of eliminating prostitution and other illegal activities on the island, especially Saipan's prime tourist area.

Increased military exercises in CNMI

COMNAV Marianas Rear Admiral Tom S. Fellin yesterday said the CNMI should expect the presence of more US Navy training exercises in the region. While noting the importance of Saipan as a liberty port for sea-weary American sailors, Mr. Fellin underscored the significance of the Farallon de Medilla and Tinian as live fire and special training exercise areas, respectively.

Business

Thailand pitches rice cartel intent

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)

— Thailand, the world's biggest rice exporter, said Friday that it wants to form an OPEC-style cartel with four of its Southeast Asian neighbors so they have more control over rice prices, which have tripled this year.

Commerce Minister Mingkwan Saengsuwan plans to talk with his counterparts in Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam about the proposal.

The price of rice has reached \$1,000 a ton for 100 percent Grade B white rice, the regional benchmark.

"Though we are the food center of the world, we have had little influence on the price," said Thai government spokesman Vichienchot Sukchokrat. "With the oil price rising so much, we import expensive oil but sell rice very cheaply and that's unfair to us and hurts our trade balance."

Samak said Myanmar supported the idea, while officials in Vietnam said they are studying it and may support it.

Meanwhile, a strike that cut production at an Exxon Mobil Corp. facility in Nigeria ended Thursday, giving investors another reason to sell. Oil prices jumped last week on word of the strike and a separate labor action in Scotland, which ended Tuesday. Nigeria is a major U.S. oil supplier.

Analysts caution that oil's swoon could be temporary. The dollar's protracted decline has been a major factor behind oil's rise from about \$64 a year ago, and future dollar weakness could easily push crude futures above \$120.

As the dollar has strengthened this week, oil futures have dropped more than \$7 from their highs to their lowest levels since

Stocks rise and Dow crosses 13,000 as dollar advances

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall

Street shot higher Thursday as investors, while anticipating another dismal jobs report Friday, viewed the rising dollar and falling oil prices as promising signs for the economy. The Dow Jones industrial average soared nearly 190 points to close above 13,000 for the first time since Jan. 3.

The dollar jumped on better-than-expected economic data and the Federal Reserve's apparent resolve to monitor

Nation

Thousands rally in May Day effort for immigration reform

CHICAGO (AP)—Thousands of chanting, flag-waving immigrants and activists rallied in cities across the country Thursday, attempting to reinvigorate calls for immigration reform in a presidential election year in which the economy has taken center stage.

From Washington to Miami to Los Angeles, immigrant rights activists demanded citizenship opportunities for the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. and an end to raids and deportations.

"We come here to fight for legalization. We're people. We have rights," said Eric Molina, an undocumented factory worker who immigrated to Zion, Ill., from Mexico.

Molina, his sister and his 13-year-old daughter Erika, a U.S. citizen, were among about 15,000 people who rallied in Chicago in one of the largest demonstrations of the day.

Turnout has fallen sharply since the first nationwide rallies in 2006, when more than 1 million people—at least 400,000 in Chicago alone—clogged streets and brought downtown traffic to a standstill. Activists say this year's efforts are focused less on protests and more on voter registration and setting an agenda for the next president.

Some said participation likely was lower because many immigrants increasingly fear deportation.

Margot Veranes, a volunteer organizer in Tucson, Ariz.,—where 12,000 took to the streets last year but early estimates Thursday put the crowd at about 500—blamed the turnout on aggressive enforcement by Border Patrol and police.

"People have been stopped and deported in the last week. This is a community living in fear," said Veranes, a researcher for the International Union

of Painters and Allied Trades. "You never know when you're going to be stopped by Border Patrol and now the police."

But she said that's also why people were marching.

"We're marching to end the raids and the deportations, but we're also marching for health care and education and good jobs," she said.

In Washington, immigrant rights groups and social justice organizations were demanding that Prince William County, in northern Virginia, rescind its anti-illegal immigration measure. They also called for an end to raids and deportations and for establishment of worker centers in Washington, Maryland and Virginia.

Activists also asked the Republican and Democratic national committees to have their presidential candidates enact immigration reform.

A crowd of about 1,000

gathered on the steps of the Oregon Capitol in Salem to call for changes in immigration and workplace laws within the first 100 days of the next congressional session. Many demanded that Oregon

reverse a decision, imposed by the Legislature in February, to require proof of legal residence to get a driver's license.

Hugo Orozco, 17-year-old high school senior, was among

hundreds who marched through the streets of southwest Detroit. He was born in the U.S., but his father was born in Mexico and some other family members are originally from Mexico.

Superdelegate defection jolts Clinton

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP)—

Hillary Rodham Clinton was jolted Thursday by the defection of one of her longtime superdelegate supporters, a former national party chairman who urged fellow Democrats to "reject the old negative politics" and unify behind Barack Obama.

"A vote for Hillary Clinton is a vote to continue" a long, self-destructive Democratic campaign, Joe Andrew added in a letter designed to have an impact on the turbulent race nationally as well as in his home state of Indiana, site of a primary next week.

"A vote to continue this process is a vote that assists John

McCain," Andrew wrote.

In response, Clinton told ABC's "Nightline": "I think this has been good for the Democratic Party... People can decide however they want to decide. That's up to them. But anyone who believes this is bad for the party I just think is not paying attention, because the level of enthusiasm to be part of this process is, from my perspective, helping us build a stronger and deeper Democratic base."

Andrew's defection came at a particularly opportune time for Obama. The front-runner in the race, he has won more states than his rival as well as

more of the popular vote, and he has an overall lead in delegates, 1736.5-1602.5. It takes 2,025 to clinch the nomination.

But he has struggled in recent days to limit the political damage caused by controversial comments by his former pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright.

Clinton's hopes of stalling Obama's drive to the nomination rest on a strong showing in the remaining primaries, beginning Tuesday in Indiana. At the same time, she hopes to persuade superdelegates that she would be a stronger candidate for the party this fall against McCain and the Republicans.

ACROSS THE NATION

Ky. school bus involved in crash, 1 student killed

FALMOUTH, Ky. (AP)—A school bus and dump truck crashed Thursday along a road with hairpin turns, killing a student and injuring 12 people in northern Kentucky, police said. The collision occurred shortly after 7 a.m. on Highway 22 in Pendleton County, a rural farmland area about 40 miles south of Cincinnati. Pendleton County Sheriff Craig Peoples said it was a student who died in the crash. He did not release additional information. State police did not release details about what caused the crash. Ten children and both drivers are being treated for what appears to be minor injuries, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Bush calls for approval of \$770 million in food aid

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush urged Congress Thursday to approve \$770 million to help alleviate dramatically escalating food prices that threaten widespread hunger and increasing social unrest around the world. In a surprise midafternoon appearance at the White House, Bush announced he is asking lawmakers to approve the additional funds for global food aid and development programs. The money—to be directed primarily at needy African nations—is being included in a broader \$70 billion Iraq war funding measure for 2009 that the White House sent to Capitol Hill on Thursday.

Barge accident closes 2 bridges linking Iowa, Illinois

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Several fully loaded barges broke loose on the flood-swollen Mississippi River, striking two key bridges and forcing a halt to highway and railroad traffic early Thursday. Three of the five barges that came loose hit the U.S. Highway 34 bridge that connects Burlington, Iowa, and Gulfport, Ill., said Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Tim Whalen. The landmark bridge, opened in 1993, is also known as the Great River Bridge. One of the three barges then struck the nearby BNSF railroad bridge, and remained pinned against the bridge late Thursday morning. All five barges were loaded with grain or coal, Whalen said, but he didn't know who owned them.

Northwestern rescinds honorary degree offer to Rev. Wright

EVANSTON, Ill. (AP)—Northwestern University has withdrawn its offer of an honorary degree to the former pastor of Democrat Barack Obama. A university official says the school had offered the Rev. Jeremiah Wright an honorary Doctorate of Sacred Theology. But vice president for university relations Alan Cubbage now says the offer has been rescinded because of the controversy surrounding Wright. He also says the school wants "to ensure that the celebratory character of commencement not be affected." Wright is the former senior minister at Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. His criticisms of the United States have drawn criticism to Obama's presidential campaign.



Emmanuel Mercado, 13, of Fresno, Calif., holds part of a huge American flag banner during an immigration rally on the Fulton Mall in Fresno, Thursday May 1, 2008.

W.Va.U. embroiled in a scandal over degree for gov's daughter

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (AP)—This is not how West Virginia University wanted to build its national reputation.

Six months after his inauguration, President Mike Garrison is struggling to hold his administration together—and keep his job—amid a scandal that erupted after the school granted Gov. Joe Manchin's daughter a master's degree she didn't earn.

Two top university officials resigned last weekend over their part in the episode. Major donors have canceled plans to donate millions. Members of the Faculty Senate are planning a no-confidence vote on Garrison next week. And critics inside and outside the university have demanded the president resign over what appears to be an instance in which political pull influenced the awarding of a degree.

"If you have smart officials, they know this would be one

of the quickest ways to ruin the reputation of the university," said Thomas Morawetz, a professor and authority on ethics at the University of Connecticut law school. "It is a serious violation of norms."

With more than 27,000 students, West Virginia is the pride of a state where people say they "bleed blue and gold." Mountaineer alumni include the governor and NBA Hall of Famer Jerry West.

The university has helped generations of West Virginians—many of them the sons and daughters of coal miners and steelworkers—lift themselves up in a poor state. But it also perennially ranks among the nation's top party schools.

Now some fear the scandal threatens the university's effort to improve its academic reputation and turn itself into a national research powerhouse. Garrison himself has made high-tech research a priority, successfully

lobbying the state Legislature for a multimillion-dollar "bucks for brains" program.

An editorial in the student newspaper, The Daily Atheneum, said the administration has "trivialized all degrees this university has awarded and will award."

"I suppose this is the price paid for attending a university with such an intimate connection to its state, a final reminder of how dirty West Virginia can be, and not just from the coal dust of economic fallout," student columnist Chad Wilcox wrote separately.

The scandal cracked wide open last week after an investigative panel issued a report saying the university showed "seriously flawed" judgment last fall in retroactively awarding an executive master's of business administration degree to Heather Bresch, who attended the school in 1998 but did not earn enough credits.

TARPON SPRINGS, Fla. (AP)—A woman convicted two weeks ago of being the "D.C. Madam" hanged herself Thursday, apparently making good on her vow never to go to prison for running a high-end Washington prostitution ring. The body of Deborah Jeanne Palfrey was found in a shed near her mother's home about 20 miles northwest of Tampa. Police said the 52-year-old Palfrey left at least two suicide notes and other writings to her family in a notebook, but they did not disclose their contents. Palfrey apparently hanged herself with nylon rope from the shed's ceiling. Her mother discovered the body.

Jury acquits soldier in shooting death of Iraqi insurgent

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP)—A military jury Thursday acquitted an Army sergeant of pre-meditated murder in the death of an unarmed Iraqi insurgent who was killed in a village overrun by al-Qaida operatives. The family of Sgt. Leonardo Trevino gasped, clapped and sobbed Thursday after the verdict in his court-martial was read. The 31-year-old from San Antonio also was cleared on charges of attempted murder, solicitation to commit murder and three counts of obstruction of justice. Trevino said he felt betrayed by the soldiers who testified against him but that he held no ill will toward the Army. "I can stand here and say I'm proud to wear the uniform," he said.

Asia

Pro-Tibet protester hassled, Hong Kong torch relay starts

HONG KONG (AP)—The Olympic torch began its relay through Hong Kong Friday before a flag-waving crowd that heckled a pro-Tibetan protester and jostled the police officers protecting her.

Officers eventually put university student Christina Chan into a police van and took her to a police station to protect her from the crowd. Many yelled obscenities and about 30 people pushed and shoved a dozen

police surrounding her. Chan was part of a small group of protesters who held Tibetan flags and signs calling for democracy and human rights in China but were far outnumbered by the pro-China crowd.

Chan said she didn't mind the hostile crowd, but she was upset about the police protection.

"What right do they have to take me away? I have a right

to express my opinion," said Chan, 21.

Another group of seven pro-democracy activists were overwhelmed by torch supporters, who drowned out their slogans with insults like "running dog," "traitor" and "get out!" The activists, holding a banner that said "Return power to the people," were surrounded by 80 police and eventually ducked into a police vehicle for protection.

Japan detergent suicide sparks panic

TOKYO (AP)—A man triggered panic in a northern Japanese city Thursday when he killed himself by mixing detergents in his house, releasing toxic fumes that drove 350 people from their homes—the latest in a series of such suicides.

The panic in Otaru came just

hours after national police urged Internet providers to crack down on Web sites that have spurred a wave of detergent-related suicides. Some 50 people have reportedly killed themselves over the past month in Japan by mixing household chemicals to produce hydrogen sulfide.

Almost 300 Cambodian reptiles rescued

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—Hundreds of reptiles including some endangered species were rescued from traffickers and released into their natural habitat in Cambodia, a conservation group said Thursday.

Twelve endangered yel-

low-headed temple turtles were among the nearly 300 reptiles—weighing a total of 925 pounds—that authorities confiscated this week in Cambodia's northwestern Battambang province, the Washington, D.C.-based Wildlife Alliance said.

It said the animals were freed Wednesday following their rescue Monday, when Wildlife Alliance members were with Cambodian forestry officials and police who stopped a pickup truck taking the animals to Vietnam.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indonesian customs officers seize 3 human skulls at airport

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Three human skulls being sent to Britain were seized at Indonesia's international airport, a customs officer said Thursday. The sponge-wrapped skulls were packed in separate boxes and labeled as handicrafts, said Eko Darmanto, chief of customs at Jakarta's airport. Two were intricately carved or decorated and the third remained in its original form. "Police are investigating a possible crime," he told reporters, adding that the skulls originated from Bali island and were destined for Yorkshire via air courier. Indonesia's criminal code says anyone who intentionally digs or moves human remains from a grave for sale or collection faces up to 14 months in jail.

7 die in landslide in Indian Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—A landslide Thursday killed at least seven workers building a highway through a mountainous region in Kashmir, police said. Deputy Inspector-General of Police Hemant Lohia said rescuers were searching

for seven more workers feared buried under the rubble by the landslide near Thalharan village, about 100 miles southeast of Srinagar, the summer capital of India's Jammu-Kashmir state. The chances of finding them alive were slim, Lohia said. Seven bodies have already been pulled from the heap of boulders, rocks and loose earth, Lohia said. The landslide was apparently triggered by the construction work, when part of the mountain was sliced off to make way for the new road, he said.

Rice not lacking in Japan, but it's running short of butter

TOKYO (AP)—Japan has so far escaped the shortages of rice besetting other nations, but it's running short of a food product the Japanese once disparagingly associated with foreigners—butter. The Agriculture Ministry said Thursday it ordered the nation's four major dairy producers to churn out more butter because the product is disappearing fast from store shelves as a result of a fall in milk supplies and higher demand from consumers, who are eating more bread these days. Official Tsuyoshi

Hashimoto said increased domestic production is more attractive than stepped up imports because foreign butter has become more expensive. A drought in Australia drove up the cost of cattle feed and demand for butter also has risen elsewhere in Asia.

Hong Kong bus crash kills 18 Christians

HONG KONG (AP)—A tour bus lost control going down a hill and flipped over Thursday in Hong Kong, killing 18 members of a local Christian group and injuring 44 others. The driver was arrested on charges of dangerous driving. Local TV reports showed mostly elderly passengers covered in blood and wincing in pain as they were being pulled from the battered bus. The vehicle's windows were shattered and it was leaning against a road barrier in the suburban district of Sai Kung. "The driver kept turning the steering wheel, then he just crashed," one passenger wearing a bloodstained white shirt told Hong Kong Cable TV. "The bus was going down the hill. It was pretty fast." Eighteen passengers died, said Ho Chak-kan, acting police superintendent.

World

Abbas has heart procedure

JERUSALEM (AP)—Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas underwent a heart procedure in Jordan on Thursday to check for blood vessel blockages, but no problems were found and he was promptly discharged from the hospital.

Abbas planned to return to the West Bank on Friday and quickly resume work. But the treatment drew attention to the Palestinian leader's delicate health history, and the Palestinians' lack of a succession plan at a sensitive time of peace efforts with Israel.

In Amman, Abbas' physician, Dr. Abdullah al-Bashir, said he performed the angiogram as part of a routine annual medical checkup.

Israelis stand silently as sirens wail for Holocaust victims

BEIT MEIR, Israel (AP)—Sixty-three years and five days after he stumbled sick and starving from a Nazi transport train and was freed by Russian cavalrymen, Raul Teitelbaum stood motionless Thursday as sirens wailed across Israel in tribute to victims of the Holocaust.

Drivers shut off their engines and pedestrians halted on sidewalks for a two-minute ritual

Double suicide attack on wedding caravan kills 35

BAGHDAD (AP)—Two suicide bombers attacked a wedding caravan Thursday as it drove through a crowded market district past bystanders cheering the bride and groom, killing at least 35 people and wounding 65 in a town northeast of Baghdad, officials said.

In the capital, a bomb-rigged parked car exploded when a U.S. patrol went by in a crowded area earlier in the day, leaving a U.S. soldier and at least nine Iraqis dead. The attack also wounded 26 Iraqis and two American soldiers.

The terror attacks came amid heightened worries that al-Qaida in Iraq is regrouping despite recent security gains by U.S.-led forces, which find themselves facing in-

tensified fighting with Shi'ite extremists, particularly in Baghdad's militia stronghold of Sadr City.

In the suicide assault, a woman bomber blew herself up as people were dancing and clapping while members of the passing wedding party played music in Balad Ruz, a predominantly Shi'ite town 45 miles northeast of Baghdad.

A male bomber attacked minutes later as police and ambulances arrived at the scene, said Maj. Gen. Abdul-Karim al-Rubaie, head of the Diyala provincial operations center that oversees Balad Ruz.

The two explosions tore through the stalls and stores that lined the area, and al-Rubaie said at least 35 people were killed and 65 suffered wounds, including the bride and groom.

The day has special significance for the quarter-million Israelis who are Holocaust survivors like Teitelbaum, 77, a grandfather who was wearing leather loafers and a spotless blue blazer on the memorial day. When the siren sounded, he was on his way to deliver a lecture to a group of young female soldiers in a rural community outside Jerusalem.



In this undated photo released on Thursday May 1, 2008 and supplied by Namdeb Diamond Corporation, Dr. Dieter Noli, the chief archaeologist of the Southern Africa Institute of Maritime Archaeological Research poses as he sits counting the day's "take" of gold coins from a bucket into his hat, that were found off Namibia's southwest coast.

Treasure trove found in shipwreck off Africa

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP)—The ship was laden with tons of copper ingots, elephant tusks, gold coins—and cannons to fend off pirates. But it had nothing to protect it from the fierce weather off a particularly bleak stretch of inhospitable African coast, and it sank 500 years ago.

Now it has been found, stumbled upon by De Beers geologists prospecting for diamonds off Namibia.

"If you're mining on the coast, sooner or later you'll find a wreck," archaeologist Dieter Noli

said in an interview Thursday.

Namdeb Diamond Corp., a joint venture of the government of Namibia and De Beers, first reported the April 1 find in a statement Wednesday, and planned a news conference in the Namibian capital next week.

The company had cleared and drained a stretch of seabed, building an earthen wall to keep the water out so geologists could work. Noli said one of the geologists saw a few ingots, but had no idea what they were. Then the team found what looked like cannon barrels.

The geologists stopped the

brutal earth-moving work of searching for diamonds and sent photos to Noli, who had done research in the Namibian desert since the mid-1980s and has advised De Beers since 1996 on the archaeological impact of its operations in Namibia.

The find "was what I'd been waiting for, for 20 years," Noli said. "Understandably, I was pretty excited. I still am."

Noli's original specialty was the desert, but because of Namdeb's offshore explorations, he had been preparing for the possibility of a wreck, even learning to dive.

Maharlika – PinoyNews

RP buys enough rice to fill shortfall

By OLIVER TEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS BANOS, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines has enough rice to cover this year's domestic shortfall, the agriculture chief said Friday, as the government signed an agreement with rice experts aimed at making the country self-sufficient in the staple.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the Philippines, the world's top rice importer, has already secured 1.6 million tons of rice to make up for a 10 percent gap between domestic production and consumption.

Despite record high prices—pushed by export curbs, hoarding and price speculation in Asia's rice producing nations—

the Philippines is seeking to buy another 675,000 tons in Monday's tender, but that would be used as a buffer stock, Yap told reporters.

The government failed to buy all the grain it sought in an April tender despite agreeing to pay 62 percent more than at a similar tender just a month ago.

The state-run grain importer, the National Food Authority,

ON THE NET
International Rice Research Institute: <http://www.irri.org>

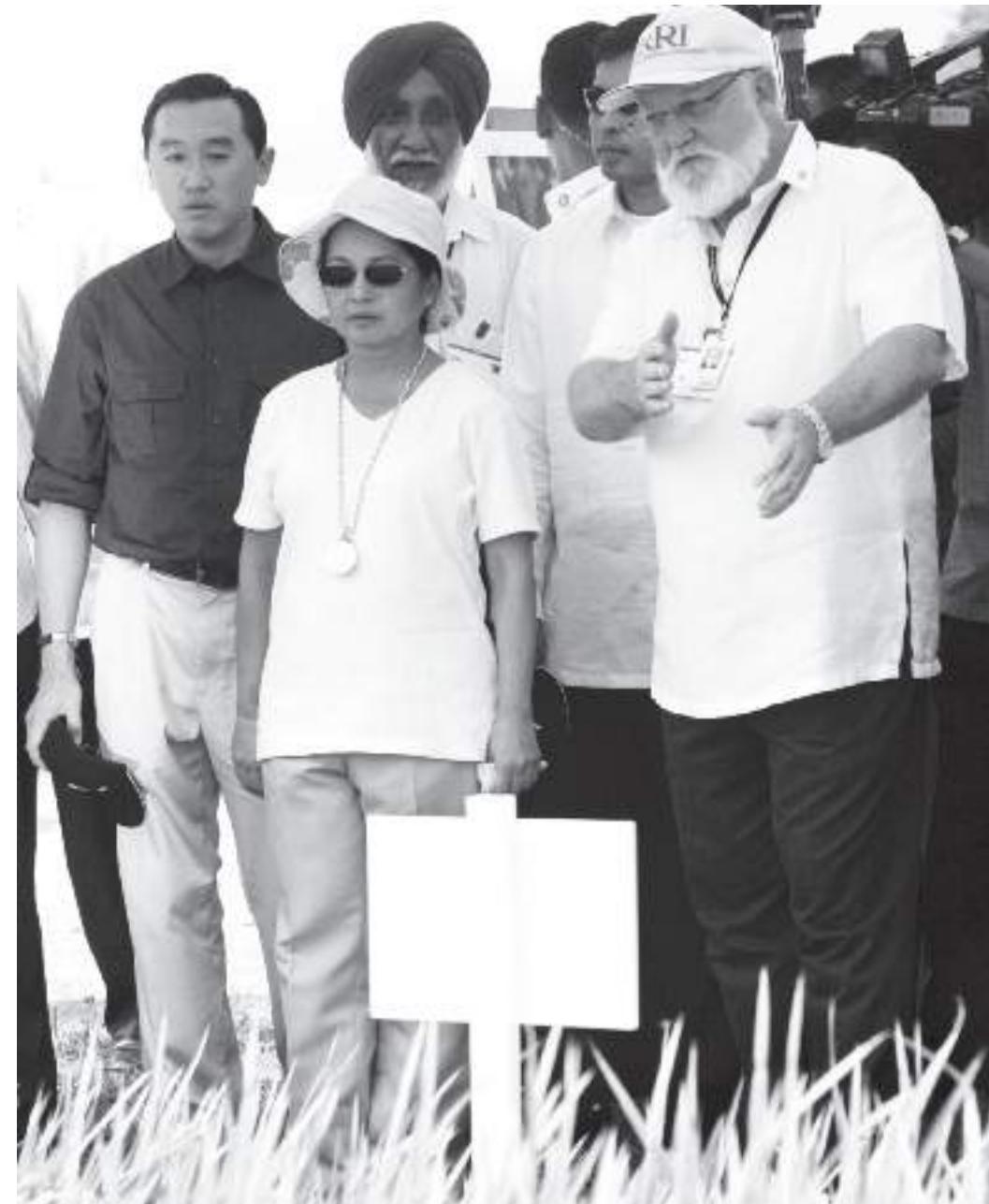
said it has so far signed contracts for about half of the 2.1 million tons of rice it plans to import this year. The price of rice from Thailand, the world's biggest exporter, topped US\$1,000 (€640) per ton this month, nearly triple

the January price.

In Los Banos, the site of the International Rice Research Institute, which has been developing rice varieties that can withstand drought or floods to help farmers across the world, Yap signed an agreement with the institute to accelerate rice production in the country, from the current average of 3.5 tons to 5 tons per hectare.

Robert Zeigler, director general of the institute, said the target production "would take care of the rice needs of the Philippines."

Yap, accompanied by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, told reporters he expects the Philippines to achieve rice self-sufficiency by 2010 or 2011, barring bad weather.



AP

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, center, listens as International Rice Research Institute Director General Robert Ziegler shows her the different variety of rice being studied during her visit Friday, May 2, 2008 at the IRRI site in Los Banos, province of Laguna south of Manila.

Saudi religious police arrest a Filipina nurse, male colleague

RIYADH—Saudi Arabia's religious police have arrested a Filipina nurse for sitting in a restaurant with a male colleague, a Philippine diplomat said.

Abigail Valdez, a nurse who works at the Riyadh Military Hospital, is being held at Al-Malaz Prison on charges of "immorality," Philippine Ambassador Antonio P. Villamor told Arab News.

Villamor said the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh was trying to gain access to Valdez, who was arrested by members of the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice on Monday evening for being with an unrelated man, a taboo in the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom.

But Vice Consul Gerardo P. Abiog, who is in charge of the embassy's Assistance to Nationals Section, said Filipino embassy of-

ficials who went to see Valdez were denied access by Saudi authorities.

"She would be released if the hospital (where she works) intervenes. She's still in jail," said Abiog, adding that prison authorities said they needed the approval of senior authorities.

"In the past, Riyadh Military Hospital has not intervened in such a case, saying the legal system should prevail," he said. "I don't think she has been allowed contact with anyone. Even we at the embassy are having difficulty trying to see and talk to her."

The embassy official said that in such cases, it first investigates the incident and then tries talking to the person's employer to get them bail out the individual. "However, we cannot force the employer if they do not want to act," Abiog said.

Unrelated men and women caught dining at a Saudi restaurant would normally be sentenced to four months in jail and 100 lashes. The same punishment applies to a man and a woman caught in a state of seclusion (khulwa).

Women in Saudi Arabia, which applies a rigorous doctrine of Islam known as Wahhabism, face a host of constraints, including a ban on driving. They are forced to cover from head to toe in public, and cannot mix with men other than relatives or travel without written permission from their male guardian.

Valdez's male colleague, who is of a Western nationality, was released several hours after being taken to a commission center and then to a police station. The man, who asked his name not be published, had his feet shackled when he resisted arrest.

DOLE's Labor Day message to Filipinos

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
Rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The heroism and innumerable contributions of overseas Filipino workers enables Filipinos to enjoy an economy that is sturdy despite turmoil, according to Philippine Labor and Employment Secretary Marianato D. Roque.

In a statement released yesterday to mark the country's Labor Day celebration, Roque recognized the OFWs, saying that "it is with enormous pride that I join the entire nation in honor-

ing our Filipino workers."

"In challenging moments such as the one our country is currently going through, it is the resiliency of our workers that keeps the nation moving forward," Roque said. "It is their determination and diligence that have been boosting the nation's spirit to overcome the odds and eventually prevail in the midst of these critical developments affecting not only the country but other parts of the globe as well."

This year's celebration centers on the theme "Manggawa ng Pinoy: Kasangga sa

"Pagsulog ng Kaunlaran" which highlights the significant role of Filipino workers in bringing about progress.

"Such recognition may be an understatement of their actual inputs to the economy in particular and to the society in general as they can never be qualified nor quantified in any terms tangible," Roque said.

He added that it is imperative that the people of the Philippines not forget the sacrifices of OFWs "that made possible our continuous economic turnaround."

"We salute our OFWs for always keeping our country foremost in their hearts and in their minds as they continue living up to being one of the most highly-regarded workers in the world," Roque said. "Move on OFWs! You exemplify the best in Filipinos."

LABOR FRONT

Transition for religious occupations

By FERDIE P. DE LA TORRE
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: What is the effective date of the transition for religious occupations?

A: The transition for religious occupations took effect on Jan. 1, 2008, the effective date of Public Law 15-108 or the new labor reform law. The transition period will go through Oct. 1, 2008.

According to the new Labor Employment Rules and Regulations, the purpose of such transition is to phase out the availability of approved employment contracts of foreign national workers hired by bona fide religious affiliates as employees rather than as leaders.

Q: During the transition period for religious occupations, what type of employment contracts the Labor director may grant?

A: In the transition period, the Labor director may approve employment contracts under which a bona fide religious undertaking is the employer and the position to be filled by the alien worker is a professional position in a religious vocation or occupation. According to the Labor Employment Rules and Regulations, such an employment contract may be for a term of three years.

Q: What will happen after the end of the transition for religious occupations?

A: After Oct. 1, 2008, the Labor director may not approve any employment contract other than for a priest or similar leader of a bona fide religious undertaking.

The Regulations state that no employment contracts for alien workers as employees of a bona fide religious undertaking will be approved. Existing contracts in effect on Jan. 1, 2008, with foreign national workers who are employees and not leaders are not affected but may not be renewed at expiration in 2008 unless the contract term will not extend beyond Oct. 2008.

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EXCHANGE RATES	
DOLLAR	PESO
\$1.00	= P42.325

RP troops wound rebel commander

JOLO, Philippines (AP)—A top al-Qaida-linked militant long hunted by U.S. and Filipino troops was wounded during a military attack on a rebel encampment in the southern Philippines, a military commander said Thursday.

Philippine troops bombarded the Abu Sayyaf camp with artillery and mortar fire near Jolo island's Indanan township early Wednesday, killing at least one militant and wounding rebel commander Isnilon Hapilon, regional military spokesman Maj. Eugene Batara said.

At least one Filipino soldier was

wounded in ensuing clashes, he said, adding the military was trying to verify other reports of rebel casualties.

Marine Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban, commander of military forces on the island, said that he ordered the attack after intelligence reports indicated an "unusual convergence" of Abu Sayyaf commanders and a top Indonesian terrorism suspect, Umar Patek, who could be plotting a bomb attack.

About 100 to 150 militants were at the encampment, which had about 30 huts, when it was attacked. Several explosives in a bomb-making facility in

the encampment were destroyed by artillery and mortar fire, Sabban said.

"The important thing is we managed to dismantle the bomb-making facility," Sabban told The Associated Press by telephone from Jolo. "They were up to something big."

Troops were pursuing the militants, who fled in small groups, he said.

Hapilon was wounded in the hand during the fighting. There have been reports that his son, an Abu Sayyaf member identified as Tabari, may have been killed, but the military has not been able to confirm that, Batara said.

Jolo Governor Sakur Tan met mayors of townships near the scene of Wednesday's clash to be ready to help jittery villagers, who might abandon their homes due to the fighting.

Washington has offered a US\$5 million (€3.2 million) reward for Hapilon, who has been linked to the abduction of 17 Filipinos and three Americans in May 2001.

Abu Sayyaf, which is estimated to have 380 fighters—down from 1,000 eight years ago—is believed to have launched its last major attack in February 2005 with simultaneous bombings in Manila

and two southern cities that killed eight people and wounded more than 100.

Despite problems, the guerrillas have continued to plot attacks, including against American soldiers who have been providing counterterrorism training to Filipino troops in the country's volatile south, police said.

Washington has blacklisted Abu Sayyaf as a terrorist organization. Philippine military and police officials say the group—which seeks a separate state for the country's Muslim minority—has received training and funds from al-Qaida militants in the past.

Teen girl from RP treated in NYC for upside-down feet

By KAREN MATTHEWS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—In her 15 years, Jingle Luis has never walked on the bottoms of her feet.

Born in the Philippines with feet so clubbed they twist backward and upside down, she uses crutches to hobble on what should be the tops of her feet.

"I can accept it," Jingle said Wednesday in a voice so soft it was barely audible.

But Jingle may not have to accept the condition much longer. She and her mother journeyed from the Philippines to Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx for surgery and follow-up treatment that will consist of slowly rotating her feet until she can walk normally.

The surgery took place Thursday and went well, hospital spokesman Steven Osborne said.

Jingle's case is more severe than those usually seen by doctors in industrialized countries.

"Generally speaking, with modern technology, it doesn't get to this point," said Dr. Terry Amaral, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon who performed the surgery at Children's Hospital at Montefiore.

Clubfoot is a relatively common deformity, occurring in about one in 1,000 births. Children are usually treated in infancy with casts or braces that gradually bring the feet into correct alignment. The condition becomes harder to treat if it is not corrected early on.

Amaral said Jingle's case was complicated by the fact that her clubfoot was associated with spina bifida, a birth defect that involves the incom-

plete development of the spinal cord or its coverings.

He said doctors who saw Jingle as a baby thought that her spina bifida would shorten her life span and prevent her from walking, so they did not treat the clubfoot.

"They felt it wasn't worth managing because of the life expectancy, so they decided to leave it alone," Amaral said.

But Jingle's spina bifida is relatively mild. Her bladder and bowel functions are impaired, but she has normal intelligence and can move her feet and legs.

Jingle came to the attention of Montefiore after Dr. Randall Owen, a head and neck surgeon, traveled to the Philippines in 2003 on a mission trip organized by the Tennessee-based Christian Medical and Dental Association.

Owen saw Jingle there but could not treat her clubfoot.

"She needs a multidisciplinary team," he said. "It was nothing we could do on a two-week mission trip."

Jingle and her mother arrived in New York on April 17. In Thursday's two-hour procedure, screws were inserted into the bones of her feet and attached to scaffold-like devices that will stabilize her feet while the screws are turned bit by bit.

Amaral estimated that it would take a month to rotate the feet a few degrees at a time.

The scaffolding will be replaced by casts and then by braces, which Amaral expects Jingle to wear for about a year. Then Jingle hopes she'll be wearing high-heeled shoes, said her mother, Jasmine Luis.

Jingle and her mother will stay

Philippines, at least 20 in Colombia, 14 in Russia, 9 in Sierra Leone, 8 in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan, 7 in Afghanistan and Mexico, and 5 in Somalia, Nepal and India.

"This is a naming and shaming exercise," Prof. Sheila Coronel of the Columbia University Journalism School, said at a news conference Wednesday at U.N. headquarters launching the new Impunity Index.

Joel Simon, the committee's executive director, said the countries on the list have law enforcement institutions but generally lack the political will to go after the killers of journalists.

"Every time a journalist is murdered and the killer is allowed to walk free it sends a terrible signal to the press and to others who would harm journalists," he said.

"The governments on this list sim-



The severely clubbed feet of Jingle Luis, 15, from the Philippines, extend from her covers as she's prepped for surgery at the Children's Hospital of New York's Montefiore Medical Center, Thursday May 1, 2008.

with a friend in New Jersey during the treatment.

Jingle's father is a corn farmer; her mother sells farm-raised fish door to

door, carrying her wares on her head. Jingle has other career goals.

"I think a doctor or a nurse," she said.

ply must do more to demonstrate a real commitment to a free press. Lip service won't help save journalists' lives," Simon said. "We are calling for action: thorough investigations and vigorous prosecutions in all journalist homicides."

"We are hoping governments are embarrassed to be on the list" and will take action, he said.

The list of unsolved murders includes well known investigative reporters Anna Politkovskaya in Russia and Guillermo Bravo Vega in Colombia, Al-Arabiya correspondent Atwar Bahjat in Iraq, and kidnapped Pakistani reporter Hayatullah Khan, the committee said.

Simon explained that the index was compiled by examining every nation in the world and calculating the number of unsolved journalist murders as

a percentage of their population. Only countries with five or more unsolved murders were included.

On this basis, the worst offenders are three countries that have been mired in conflict—Iraq, Sierra Leone and Somalia.

Simon said most killings in war zones are murders and the committee only included those journalists who were targeted, not those caught in cross-fire.

Another key finding, he said, is that most countries on the Impunity Index are democratic and not at war.

The index also surprisingly includes six countries from South Asia—Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. Committee spokeswoman Abi Wright said this shows the vulnerability of journalists in the region.

'Malaysia will not abandon RP peace talks'

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Malaysia will proceed with a plan to withdraw cease-fire monitors from the southern Philippines but will not abandon its role as mediator in peace talks between the Manila government and Muslim guerrillas, Malaysia's defense forces chief said Thursday.

Gen. Abdul Aziz Zainal did not clearly state the reason for the withdrawal, but Malaysian officials last week cited a lack of progress in the talks for its planned withdrawal of its truce monitors. They make up the bulk of a 60-man international contingent credited with preventing major fighting in southern Mindanao region the last four years.

There have been concerns that the planned withdrawal of Malaysian monitors could threaten a 2003 cease-fire, spark new clashes or encourage al-Qaida-linked militants to launch attacks to sabotage the already-stalled peace negotiations.

Abdul Aziz, who arrived in the Philippines Wednesday, discussed with Philippine officials the withdrawal of the Malaysian truce monitors but stressed in a news conference Thursday that Malaysia will continue to broker the talks between Manila and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"It doesn't mean that we are abandoning the peace process," Abdul Aziz told reporters.

After a legal mandate by the Philippine government and rebels authorizing the presence of the foreign truce monitors expires in August, Abdul Aziz suggested Malaysia would still be willing to help safeguard the 2003 cease-fire somehow in a "new format."

He declined to elaborate, saying there could be talks to determine how Malaysia can continue to help to preserve the cease-fire in the future.

Abdul Aziz rejected fears that the Malaysian monitors' withdrawal could lead to violence, saying Filipinos have grown used to the absence of fighting, which have considerably dropped from up to 700 clashes a year in the past to just 15 last year.

"After four years, they don't even remember about fighting anymore," he said. "They wouldn't like to go back to the old days when they were fighting."

Philippine military chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, who met with Abdul Aziz, said the Malaysian general separately met with Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and government peace negotiator Rodolfo Garcia.

RP, 12 others dangerous to media

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Thirteen countries are the worst offenders in letting killers of journalists get away with murder—from war-torn Iraq and Somalia to peaceful democracies including Mexico, Russia and India, the Committee to Protect Journalists said.

The committee said governments in the 13 countries have consistently failed to solve murders where journalists were targeted from 1998 through 2007.

There are at least 199 unsolved murders in these countries during that 10-year period—79 in Iraq, 24 in the

Maharlika – Pinoystyle

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—With nary a tinge of irony, Ai Ai de las Alas notes that her new glass house in the hills of Quezon City best captures her off-screen personality.

"This is the real me," she says. "Simple. Subdued. Non-show biz."

Designed by architect Ricky Solatorio and built by Jomel Enterprise (owned by the family of TV director Malou Sevilla, her friend), the new home, which stands on a 650-sq. m. property, looks like a Baguio rest house.

Ai Ai insists that she was very much in charge of the interior design: "I filled it with wooden and clay pieces and limited the colors to brown and white."

HOME BODY

Through the glass, clearly

The light fixtures in the patio are made from twine and twigs.

The dining table was created by Benjie Reyes and the brown sofa in the living room is from Julianne Collection.

Her old home, also in Quezon City, is the exact opposite.

"It's modern and more colorful, with green, orange and yellow walls," she says.

She still maintains the old house, where her adoptive mom, Justa de las Alas, now lives.

A large family portrait hangs in the living room of the old house. In contrast, there are no photographs in the open areas of this new one.

Ai Ai says she is not having reminders of work in her new living room.

"I'm planning to convert the den into an entertainment room, where I'll display all my pictures, trophies, posters and other show biz stuff," she says.

(Right now, the den doubles as commissary for her restaurant business, Ai Sarap.)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The facade of Ai Ai de las Alas' new glass house on the hills of Quezon City.

Beautiful view

She relates that it was her idea to install huge glass doors, so as not to waste the beautiful view in front of the house.

"That's what you pay for in this village," she quips. "It's also to let the light in. I don't want a dark house. I want it airy and bright, like a summer resort, minus the beach."

Instead, she had a fountain installed in the garden.

The new house, which she shares with her children Sancho, Shaun and Sophia, is her refuge from the grind of the biz.

(Just how busy is she? Although her movie with Robin Padilla, "Ikaw Pa Rin," is yet to premiere, she's set to start work on her "historic" film with former President Joseph Estrada, and a new TV sitcom with Judy Ann Santos.)

"I feel safe here," she says of her new abode. "It's my comfort zone. When things get too hectic at work, I rush home to calm myself down."

At the time of the Inquirer visit, Ai Ai had a special guest: birth mom Gloria Hernandez de las Alas who was visiting from Batangas.

"She doesn't like Manila," proud daughter says. "She'd rather stay in the province because she gets bored here."

Ai Ai candidly relates that their real-life family drama can put most soap operas to shame.

"My mom never recovered after I was given to my adoptive mother (who's also her aunt) when I was a baby," she recounts. "Imagine, I'm 43 and she still cries over it."

Ai Ai feels doubly blessed that she can share her blessings with her two moms.

"Having two houses after 18 years in show biz isn't bad," she says. "At least, I made something out of my life."

The new home is of special significance. "After I moved here, I always look forward to going home. After everything I went through, it feels like God's gift."

ly, the seller has a tie up already with the banks or financial institutions to make it easier for car buyers. The collateral is the vehicle itself: If you can't pay anymore, they'll take your car back.

On the other hand, if you will use the loan proceeds for any other purpose (such as to pay off other debts or take a vacation), then look for a short-term all-purpose personal loan. Although pawnshops offer this as well using jewelry and cell phones as collateral, they may offer a higher interest rate than banks and financial institutions.

Some banks offer a line of credit with your deposits in your savings or time deposit as collateral. A line of credit may also be offered when you have a high credit limit in your credit card. This is probably what the telemarketer called you about.

The most expensive type of loan is the character loan, which is unsecured by collateral. You need not tie up an asset to back up your loan application. However, due to that very reason, the interest rate may be higher.

What creditors look for

Not everyone who applies for a loan is granted one. Creditors look for the presence of the 4 C's in a loan applicant:

1. Character. If a person would like to borrow money from you, you would first gauge if that person is trustwor-

Dingdong chooses love over money

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Bells keep ringing for Dingdong Dantes as his career zooms higher.

He has a new TV series, "Dyesebel," where he plays the character Fredo, a man whose priority is money and not love.

It's the other way around with Dong. "Love mixed with hard work and passion can be a perfect formula. I use love as an inspiration to work," he said. "So I believe love must come first. Even at least, love for self."

Isn't he wary that his team-up with Marian Rivera will limit his growth as a solo actor? "I'm overjoyed that we were given another chance to work as a pair. Although I know someday we will be taking separate paths. It is best to make use of this chance to grow as a pair and as individuals as well."

Any which way, the clamor for Dingdong just keeps growing.

Not even friends

Jennylyn Mercado is pregnant not just with Patrick Garcia's baby but also with stressful thoughts. "Naospital ako sa sobrang sakit ng mga text sa akin ni Pat," said Jen. "Sana 'wag niya akong ginaganun kasi alam naman niya na delicate ang condition ko."

Could Patrick just be jealous of her rumored new BF, deejay Andrei Felix? "Andrei's just a friend. Sana 'wag naman lagan ng malisya ng mga tao kung may mga friends akong concerned lang sa akin," she said. "Si Patrick di na kami lovers, di pa kami friends."

Her OB-gyne told her she has a baby boy. Will she name him Patrick Jr.? "Ay! Ayoko nun (laughs). Gusto ko ng unique na name." Enough said, too much felt.

Guess who

This TV host owes a lot of celebrities big bucks because of his failed business

venture which they gamely invested in out of pakikisama. As a comedienne revealed, "I gave him 200K last year pa but till now wala pa ring return of investment. Marami pang ibang artista na di pa niya nababayaran. Out of hiya or awa sa kanya kaya di kami nag-sasalita. Pero sana ma-solve niya ang problema kasi hard-earned money ko yon." Hopefully, the TV host is not too hard-up to do so.

Kids' idol

Aga Muhlach may be the object of many women's fantasies but he also happens to be an idol of kids who look up to him as Doc Aga in "That's My Doc" (now on a new time slot, 6 p.m. every Saturday on ABS-CBN).

What was Aga like when he was a kid? "He loved to chew on the edges of his blanket like a rat," recalled his equally gorgeous dad Tito Cheng. "That's how we coined his nickname Aga kasi para siyang daga (laughs)."

No wonder Ags is unbeatable in the show biz race to sustain fame.

Not the best

Regine Velasquez's birthday TV special "Best of Me" was quite a delight, although it could have been better if she sang more of her signature songs. She veered away from her usual repertoire for a change.

It was an experiment worth doing but her choice of songs didn't exactly represent the best of her. So the show's title somewhat turned into a misnomer.

The special was shot in her home but only the garden/pool area was shown. It's Regine's right to keep the rest of her inner sanctum private. That defeats the purpose of shooting at her place, though.

For the show's finale, she dived into her pool. My gay friend exclaimed, "Ay! Plugging din ba yan ng 'Dyesebel'?" Whoa! A swimming (song) bird!

term progresses. Find out which would be more advantageous for you.

2. Terms of payment. Are the terms reasonable enough for you?

3. Ease of payment. Do you have to travel for an hour or two to pay the amortization? It would be better if you can pay it at the nearest bank branch or pay it online.

4. Customer service. Are you comfortable with the way the bank or financial institution has been dealing with you?

5. The fine print. Read the fine print for conditions and other terms which may affect your loan status in the future.

Your duty

Once you have decided on a loan, be committed to pay it off on time. Not only will you avoid penalty fees on top of the interest; you will be safeguarding your good name and credit rating as well.

INQUIRER.net and Citibank invite readers to ask questions regarding financial matters. Send your questions to personal_finance@inquirer.net. Readers are solely responsible for their own investment decisions and should thus conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional advice. INQUIRER.net will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from our web site.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Taking a loan? Read this first

INQUIRER.net

Question: I need to get a personal loan but don't know where to best avail of it. There are finance companies and banks that offer this. Even my credit card is offering me a loan. One of their telemarketers called me the other day offering me one. Where is the best place to get a loan? And what should I look out for? — Samantha

Answer: These days, when one needs money urgently, the borrower has more options than the so-called "5-6" informal loan sharks in the community. Those loan sharks can charge up to 20 percent interest on a very short time frame. Fortunately, there are now a number of legal entities where people can avail of loans at more reasonable interest rates and affordable payment schemes.

Why get a loan

Determine first why you need a loan. Where will the proceeds be used? Knowing the purpose of getting a loan will help you choose the right loan product for you.

For instance, to raise funds for home improvement and repairs, you may be better off getting a housing loan from a bank or financial company. They will take into account the fact that it may take a while for the repairs to be done, and will give clients longer-term payments. These loan products may even be tied with government loan programs such as those from Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System and Pag-Ibig Fund. They can also give you a higher loan amount, based on the value of the collateral you provide, which may be your house or lot or both.

For a child's tuition fee, there are products geared toward this purpose.

Check with your bank. Often the product will offer low interest rate and a shorter term, such as 6, 12 or 24 months. It is also possible that the school will offer payment terms that will help you better manage this expense.

Apply for a business loan from a bank or a credit cooperative to finance the working capital requirements of your business. The terms will be based on the viability of your business.

A car loan can be availed of when purchasing a new or secondhand car. Usual-

ly, the seller has a tie up already with the banks or financial institutions to make it easier for car buyers. The collateral is the vehicle itself: If you can't pay anymore, they'll take your car back.

On the other hand, if you will use the loan proceeds for any other purpose (such as to pay off other debts or take a vacation), then look for a short-term all-purpose personal loan. Although pawnshops offer this as well using jewelry and cell phones as collateral, they may offer a higher interest rate than banks and financial institutions.

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What creditors look for

Not everyone who applies for a loan is granted one. Creditors look for the presence of the 4 C's in a loan applicant:

1. Character. If a person would like to borrow money from you, you would first gauge if that person is trustwor-

thy right? After all, he may just take the money and run. Banks and financial companies look into a person's character for the same reason. They look into a person's credit history, so dealings with credit card companies will be studied. They will also double-check your employment.

2. Capacity. Creditors will gauge if you have the capacity to pay back the loan. This is why documents such as income tax returns and property titles are scrutinized.

3. Collateral. This is tied up with number two. You should have sufficient assets to cover the loan payments.

4. Conditions. Creditors also study the external environment and base their decision on granting a loan on those conditions. Factors such as the interest rates in the market and unemployment scenario are taken into account.

What to look for before availing of a personal loan

Now if you have zeroed in on the purpose of getting a loan, and believe you have the 4Cs of credit, it's time to shop for the right lender.

Here are things you have to consider before making the decision:

1. Interest rates. Is the interest rate reasonable? Some loans have fixed rates throughout the term of the loan, while others have variable rates as the

Maharlika – Opinyon

Past, present, future

I have my own take on what we can do to stop being the basket case of Asia. I've always said, in reply to people who say "Easy to criticize, but what would you do if you were running the country?", that I'll do only three things. Three things that can assure a past, a present and a future. Those are the very same three things we do not have today, especially under the present regime. We have no past to take pride in, we have no present to be happy about, we have no future to look forward to.

The first is to teach history. I cannot sufficiently belabor the importance of this. Sanjeev Kanjilal, who wrote to comment on Romeo Encarnacion's letter, and which I commented on last Thursday, has a point about national pride. That is something Indians have and we don't. In fact that is something other Asian countries have and we don't. That alone guarantees making us the basket case of Asia. You don't have national pride or a sense of country as I myself put it, you'll get nowhere.

How to instill that pride? I know of no better way than for us to learn our history. By history, I do not just mean names and dates, though I don't mind even that so long as history is taught. I know that from personal experience. Much of my history I did not learn from the classroom, I learned it from activism. I can tell you that the sensation of reading Rizal's novels, the *Noli* and *Fili*, for the first time without them being assignments is quite literally an eye-opener. It's like having been blind your whole life and suddenly been given sight. That was true as well reading about Bonifacio and the Katipunan, Mabini and the American Occupation, and the things that happened afterward. Suddenly, you no longer feel like an orphan in the universe. Suddenly you no longer feel like a drifter in the world. You have a home you can take refuge in, you have an ancestry you can be proud of.

We keep saying we are a forgetful people. Why shouldn't we be forgetful if we are not given a past to remember? Indeed, if our own rulers make it a point to destroy that past lest it catches up with them? Which is of course the case today, and cruelly so: The very beneficiary of Edsa

II wants us to forget the thing that brought her to power. This regime isn't just erasing our past, it is erasing our instinct to remember.

The second is to assure food security. Or to put it more plainly, to feed the people. That was not, that is not and that won't be assured by a policy of importing rice. That has been, that can be and that will be assured by having self-sufficiency in rice.

The developed countries will not compromise food notwithstanding their call for free markets and open economies. The US heavily subsidizes its agriculture. EU heavily subsidizes its agriculture. Japan heavily subsidizes its agriculture. Japan is interesting because only a small portion of its lands are cultivable and it should really be importing rice rather than producing it. But it will not yield its yield and even at great cost to its coffers buys dear from farmers and sells cheap to consumers. That is how it feeds its people.

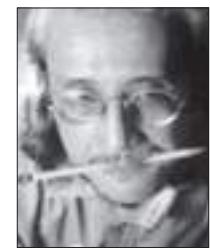
And that is how we do not. Home of IRRI and home to vast cultivable lands, we are the biggest importer of rice in Asia, possibly of the world. Under the present regime in particular, we have embarked on the foolhardy policy of trusting in the kindness of strangers. I'll leave the examination of this folly for another time. Suffice it to say that history in the form of the current rice crisis, which threatens to be long and bitter, has proven it wrong. The strangers, like Vietnam and Thailand, will not be so kind anymore.

We want to assure the present, let's reverse that policy. Whatever massive subsidy we give to rice production will always be massively cheaper than the subsidy we give to official corruption. Hell, we want to assure the present, let's get rid of this regime.

The third is education. By education, I don't just mean the three "R's" (reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic), though that is quite a substantial part of it. Every time school opens, you're assailed by the staggering sight of Korea et al having a 1-1 ratio between computer and student and our classrooms having to make do with two or even three shifts, if they are not improvised under a guava tree. How on earth are we going

THERE'S THE RUB

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
Philippine Daily Inquirer



to compete with other countries if we have only a mass of tired, poor, hungry—and ignorant—masses yearning to get by? Take it from Reggie Miller of the NBA, you don't go to school, you won't have a shot. He actually says "college," but never mind college, just mind elementary and high school. We don't have that, we'll always be prey to false economic prophets, religious crackpots and political charlatans.

But more than the three "Rs," I also mean the three "ty's"—honesty, integrity, verity. Education shouldn't just impart skills, it should impart values. And the best way to teach that is by example. Example is the best teacher of all. You have a teacher who is always drunk, who harasses students and who skips classes, no amount of lecturing by him on civics and ethics is going to stick. You have a government that lies, cheats and steals, no amount of talk by it about unity and solidarity is going to stick. When parents are a bad influence on their kids, other countries cut them off from their children, remanding the kids to the custody of child welfare. I don't see why, when government is a bad influence on its citizens, we do not boot it out of sight and remand the citizens to the custody of public welfare.

This country isn't hopeless. All it takes is a little vision and a lot of will. Let's have history, food and education and we'll have a past, a present and a future.

Our national hero as pretender

Some of the main sources for this column have been European travel accounts that describe the Philippines and the Filipinos over time, beginning with Antonio Pigafetta's chronicle of the ill-fated Magellan expedition to current Tourist Guidebooks to the Philippines written and published by foreigners. In the age before YouTube, digital pictures, the Internet and cable TV, people who wrote about their travels to the Philippines left not just impressions or traces of what they saw, but we also see them coming to terms with a new and different people and their culture. For example, Pigafetta wrote a very long description of the coconut that Filipinos find so common it is boring, but when you see a 16th century Italian trying to document his first encounter with a coconut then you see the encounter of two worlds.

Travel accounts give us a view of the past that is long gone and it is important to see in what ways we have changed, or in what ways we remain the same over time. Our problem is that we have very few historical sources written by Filipinos prior to the 19th century, and even if we did, I doubt if a 16th century Mactan warrior would write two pages on the coconut.

I have often wondered what it would be like to turn the table round and see what Filipinos have written about their trips abroad: What was Paris, Madrid, London, or New York from the eyes of an 18th or even a 20th-century Filipino? I have been rereading Jose Rizal's travel diaries and letters while visiting Paris, Madrid and Vienna in an effort to see what he saw over a century ago. Rizal's impressions of Paris are extant and one can, with some effort, follow his footsteps and see the City of Light from his eyes. His writings are so detailed, it's almost as if he is following a Baedeker guidebook going through every important tourist attraction: Notre Dame, Champs Elysees, Luxembourg Gardens, Versailles, etc.

One thing that is strangely absent from his writings is a detailed description of the Eiffel Tower, which was quite new and rather controversial in 1889 very much like other iconic buildings in Paris designed by non-Frenchmen: the Pyramid in the Louvre, Center Pompidou, Grand Bibliothèque Nationale, Musée d'Orsay, and the newly opened Musée du Quai Branly. These modern additions to the city raised a howl but, despite French protests these are now major tourist attractions.

What is also fascinating is how Rizal engaged the French who were quite curious about his origins. You will bump into a Filipino in every street corner in Paris today, but in July 1883 the French could not make him out and mistook him for a Japanese. One would assume that the Father of the Nation would proudly show the French what people of the Philippines were like, but instead he actually pretended to be a Japanese. In Spain where their Asian features were mis-

LOOKING BACK

By AMBETH OCAMPO
Philippine Daily Inquirer



Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

taken for Chinese, Rizal and friends referred to themselves as "Inchic"—this before they took on the famous name "Indio bravo."

Rizal was visiting an exhibition of Japanese art in the Palace of Industry (which that has since been demolished and replaced by the Grand Palais) and he narrated:

"There I saw an exhibition of paintings and many men and women, principally foreign artists, who took me for one from Japan, and they approached me and asked me for information about it. I gave them and told them all that I knew and when I could, I escaped through the history of Japan and her old and modern constitution. I spoke a little about the Japanese artists whose biographies I knew, like Totsugueu, Senko, Nampo, and others. They asked me about their methods and they were enchanted."

I don't recognize the above names at all. So far, Rizal's ruse went well until "it occurred to one of the young ladies to ask me about the meaning of those characters written below the paintings and I found myself in a tight spot, fearing there might be someone among those visitors who understood Japanese characters and they would catch me in the very act of telling a lie. Then I told them that the Mikado, having set up Japan in European style, had sent us to Europe when we were very young and we have been Europeanized, which, added to the difficulty of reading Japanese writing, which was not as simple as the European, explained why we have not studied our native tongue. In Europe, or rather in France, all those who are of our type and are dressed like them are Japanese (Chinese in Spain), just as over there all who wear a beard are Castilas (Spaniards)."

Rizal then made his way to the exit. This was not the only time he pretended to be what he was not. In one of the hospitals he visited, he was taken for a diplomat assigned to one of the embassies in Paris. He was given all courtesies and shown around. Rizal enjoyed his tour and then quietly slipped away.

These are often overlooked details in Rizal's writings because they do not figure in his heroism or the emergence of the Filipino nation, but getting to know the Father of the Nation better is also important because it makes the hero easier to understand, easier to relate to.

Letters to the Editor

Simply respect

This letter is in relation to the letter published May 1, 2008. Just like any other ordinary guest workers, I am not affiliated with any organizations. I am not even a friend of Irene Tantiado or Jerry Custodio.

I respect others' opinions and ideas and oftentimes argue. But I am here to remind my kababayan to be more respectful in all words that we say and letters and opinions to be published or posted in any blog. I have been a victim of this kind and it does not feel good to be in that situation.

If a group of people wants to organize another group, so be it. We are in a democratic place, so we can do whatever we want to do legally but not to the extent of hurting or insulting other people of whatever nationality, especially our kababayan.

People are correct when they say that

we have to respect the image of the Unity March and I firmly believe that we should respect the people who participated and supported it, which comprised mostly of guest workers.

This is really a time of uncertainties. We are hearing a lot of rumors, wrong information, and false hopes. I am requesting all my kababayan, if there is an issue we want to raise, let's have the nerve to personally ask the other party to sit down, talk face to face and settle the issues. Not in a media, not in a blog.

We are not really sure right now what would happen in the next few months or years, but one thing is sure, we will still be Filipinos in years to come. Some of us may leave this island sooner or later. Some of us would be lucky enough to stay. But all of us have been part of this community. Let us maintain the nice image we have created.

Malou Berueco
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Rice crisis, wage hikes and issues management

We don't need to be warned by United Nations and World Bank officials that 33 nations are confronted by the specter of high food prices, which could lead to political instability, even global chaos. Food riots could erupt here in our country as they have in other countries. But I think this is a farfetched scenario.

But in the event of a drawn-out crisis, what can the government do but to undertake damage control, that is by granting emergency powers to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Even her allies in Congress, led by Speaker Prospero Nograles, say that granting President Arroyo emergency powers at this time is highly unlikely because she has already more than enough power and authority. But if worse comes to worst, emergency powers will be granted to Ms Arroyo. These developments, however, all seem to have been staged in order to suit the ends of the administration

or, much worse, to cover up its failings.

There were also news reports about Ms Arroyo going to the Bureau of Customs and snooping like a dog over the shoulders of Customs officials as she closely monitored a case of flour smuggling. Why? Before, there was the problem of the shrinking breakfast staple bun "pan de sal"; now, it's flour smuggling.

Then, Ms Arroyo announced a wage increase for workers? Was it meant to appease the low-salaried employees and to allow them to buy rice from the National Food Authority as fuel prices continue to ratchet up.

This series of events seems to be calculated. Issues management, this is how it's called in media parlance. What happened to the Lozada exposé and other shenanigans of this administration?

Roy Reyes
via email

Maharlika – Samu't Sari



BRIDAL FAIR

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Pacific Islands Club's Cherryl Arevalo, Haoting and Julie Rafols strike a pose during the islands' first ever Bridal Fair and Party Exhibit at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan Sunday.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Aggie and Leo are wearing a wedding ensemble provided by First Floral during the islands' first ever Bridal Fair and Party Exhibit at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan Sunday. Their hair and makeup is by Eddie Uy of Hair Expectations.



FILIPINIANA DANCE GROUP

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Members of the *man'amko*'s Filipiniana Dance group gather for a photo after the proclamation signing ceremony designating the month of May as Older Americans Month/Mes Manamko'/Maramal Tufey at the Aging Office in Garapan.



FLAME TREE ARTS FEST

Filipino community members parade with the Philippine flag during the 27th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival Parade of Cultures on Beach Road from Susupe Beach Park to Civic Center Saturday morning.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



ACOUSTIC NIGHTS

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Members of Saipan Grand Hotel's newest band Remix entertain the crowd at Club V during the "Acoustic Nights with Carlsberg" Wednesday.



Shirley's Coffee Shop staff gather for a photo inside their booth during the 27th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival at the Civic Center in Susupe.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Quickprint's Obet Aguilar poses with Fe Camacho during his birthday last Thursday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Students of San Vicente Elementary School wear traditional Filipiniana attire as they parade for the 27th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival Parade of Cultures.

CELEBRATION!

Fans, family members, and friends join members of the Grand-Fiesta Hotels' basketball team that won the championship over Pacific Islands Club in the 2nd HANMI Annual Basketball Tournament held recently at Ada Gym.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youngstyle

No loss for words

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

“Poems, Poems, Poems Everywhere. . . .” That’s the opening line of “Here and There,” the poem that Jacob, 8, submitted

to our fourth annual KidsPost Poetry Contest held to celebrate National Poetry Month. You must have been reading our minds, Jacob. We received more than 1,150 poems this year. And they really were everywhere as our staff sat down to select the finalists, whose work you see below.

TOY

yesterday's yearning
today's treasure
tomorrow's trash

— Hannah, 12

Imperfections

Love me for my imperfections
My precious flaws
My countless sins
Embrace me with my differences
My tainted soul
My blemished skin
Accept me and my imperfection
It's those that make me true
I've come to terms with who I am
Now let's see what the world will do

— Anagha, 12

Rainbow Diamond

You make
a wonderful rainbow
and a beautiful light
and you appear
in my life
just like a
star in the sky
as bright
as you can be
and a beautiful sight

— Anaya, 6

A Bird's Springtime

Upon this tree I build my nest
Where leaves nor branches stir
May the smooth bark protect me,
The rounded leaves hide me,
And may I never hear a cat's purr.

— Luci, 11

Horrible, Just Horrible

I'm no good at history,
Science makes no sense to me,
Music is a mystery,
English is no friend to me,
Math is my worst enemy,
Economics tortures me,
Gym takes too much energy,
Reading is a chore to me,
Geography just loses me,
I hate Sociology,
Chemistry confuses me,
I barf in Biology,
Astronomy's just stars to me,
Even Art's too hard for me.
Well, at least I'm good at spelling.

— Jessica, 10

The Shark

(A Poem About Scissors)
Waiting in your desk
For a time
To pounce and munch
Its paper prey
Leaving it as shredded bones.

— Harrison, 8



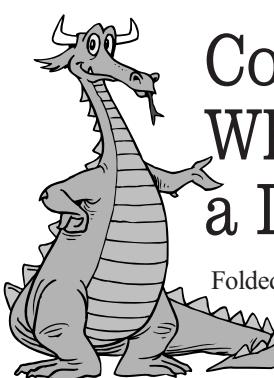
The Real World

(Inspired by Rudyard Kipling's Poem "If")

If you can read between the lines,
And use it for the better.
If you can show courage,
While not hating others.
If you can look deeply into one's eyes,
And make a promise from the heart.
A door will open to the real world.
If you can show emotions to others,
And still be truthful to yourself.
If you can understand another's feelings,
And leave your individual thoughts behind.
If you can dream something bigger than yourself,
And then make your dream come to life.
A door will open to the real world.
If you can put yourself in another's shoes,
And still not leave your own thoughts behind.
If you can stay standing when the road gets rocky,
And then learn from your mistakes.
The world will be ready for you,
And you will be ready for the world.

— Lela, 10

Contemplations While Sketching a Dragon



Folded wings are hard to draw—
Should I spread them out?
No, that would look undignified
(My art teacher would pout).
How hard can it be to draw
A creature no one ever SAW?
Yet everyone says it looks the same
As a gecko breathing tongues of flame!
Should he be red ... should he be green,
This creature no one's ever seen?
Should he be flying?
Should he be walking?
Should he be challenging knights by talking
In fiendish reptilian riddles and rhyme?
Should he be cheating the grip of time
By kidnapping maidens in heinous crime
To be told about by bards?
They'd sing it forever and ever and—
No. That's way too hard.
I'll take a breath
And count to ten.
I'll change my drawing
To a hen.

— Mary, 11



ERASER

I love erasers
I love eraser
I love erase
I love eras
I love era
I love er
I love e
I love
I lov
I lo
I l
I

— Ellie, 6



Who Am I?

Am I a wolf, who howls in the late winds?
Or am I fog, which dims the world with mist?
Am I a stray dog who is looking for a kind owner?
Or am I a lake, which leads to rivers, seas and oceans?
Am I the sky, which is towering and soaring evermore?
Or am I just a nine-year-old boy, who isn't anything at all?

— Stephen, 9

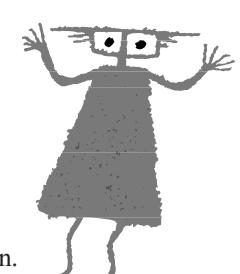
An Unknown Necessity

A voice echoes throughout the lands,
Many have heard it, but few believe it,
It rings with the church bells,
It cries with the mourners,
And it triumphs with the victors,
It is quelled by greed,
But never has it been forgotten,
The worst of people need it but do not want it,
The best of people use it for themselves and for all,
And in the darkest of times it is needed the most,
But in the lightest of times it seems to not be needed,
But it always is,
And it always will be,
For every beginning needs it,
Every end wants it,
And every middle shuns it,
It is hope.

— Brian, 12

I Am the Daughter of a Father Who Hates

I am a Daughter of a Father who hates.
I wonder why my Father yells and hits.
I hear the crying voice of my mother.
I see hitting and fighting from him.
I want it all to stop.
I am a Daughter of a Father who hates.
I pretend that it's ok.
I feel scared that he'll hurt my mom again.
I touch my sister's hand and tell her it's alright.
I worry he'll come back.
I cry myself to sleep when I think of him.
I think of the horrible things he has done.
I am a Daughter of a Father who hates.
I understand how it is not to have a loving Father.
I say "Stop fighting" — he won't listen.
I dream that one day he will say sorry for what he has done.
I try to be happy and not remember.
I hope for my mother's happiness.
I am a Daughter of a Father that hates.



— Alexandra, 12

He's baaaack...Stine's Goosebumps HorrorLand is twice as scary

By AMY ORNDORFF
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

If you were one of the most popular writers of horror stories for kids, what would give YOU goosebumps?

How about running out of ideas?

"Oh, don't say it!" author R.L. Stine begs.

Although he's spent more than 20 years writing for kids and teens, Stine isn't finished yet.

The newest addition to his Goosebumps lineup is HorrorLand, a series of 12 books with two stories in each. One story features familiar Goosebumps characters; the other puts those characters in HorrorLand, a freaky new theme park.

Here's the really cool part: The second story in each book is ongoing and won't conclude until Book 12.

The first two HorrorLand books—"Revenge of the Living Dummy" and "Creep From the Deep"—came out this month. The rest will follow at two books per month.

As a scary theme park, HorrorLand lacks for nothing, including zombies and frozen eyeballs on a stick. Yum!

To create this creepy place, Stine drew from his own experience with amusement parks.



THE WASHINGTON POST

The newest addition to R.L. Stine's Goosebumps lineup is HorrorLand, a series of 12 books with two stories in each. The first two, "Revenge of the Living Dummy" and "Creep From the Deep," came out this month.

"I love theme parks," he says in a phone interview from his home in New York City. "I would like to live at Disney World. I love it."

After visiting the Florida theme park many times, Stine had a fairly good idea of what he wanted in his park. Before he even began writing, he drew a map of HorrorLand and made detailed notes.

Kids often ask Stine how he deals with writer's block, a condition in which authors can't think of anything creative to write. He tells them that preparing before writing—by making maps and detailed outlines, for example—is one way to start.

With more than 300 books

to his name, Stine says there is no formula for writing a good story, but some themes are common. As with his other books, HorrorLand stories contain lots of unexpected laughs.

"I think there is a very close connection between humor and horror," he says. "That's why there is so much of both" in my stories.

Another common theme in his books is kids triumphing over evil—without their parents.

"Parents are useless," Stine says. "Either they don't believe the kids or they aren't any help."

His stories "are all about normal kids facing horrible, frightening problems" and "using their own wit and ... imagination" to figure things out.

First Death Anniversary

Jesus Santos Pangelinan
affectionately known as
"Jesus Talu"

We would like to invite all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate his anniversary.

Daily mass is being offered at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 6 a.m. from May 3 to May 10.

Breakfast will be served immediately after the mass at

Joeten Dai Dai and on May 11, the final mass will be offered at 9:00 a.m.

Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

Caridad M. Pangelinan and Children



Kids talk with actress Emily Osment

By ANNE CONNORS, COURTNEY CONWAY, SALLY KUAN
Kidsday Staff Reporters
© 2008, NEWSDAY

We interviewed actress Emily Osment, who stars as Lilly Truscott in "Hannah Montana," while she was in Manhattan recently.

Question: How do you feel about being so popular?

A: It is exciting and really fun. It is kind of weird because I go out and I get recognized a lot. Sometimes I forget why people are staring at me.

I get to go to places like New York and hang out. It opens up a lot of opportunities for us.

Q: Which do you like more—being in movies or on TV?

A: I like movies more because usually you get to go on location and you get to stay in places that are not Los Angeles. In TV you are usually stuck in one studio for six months and that can get kind of boring after a while. Movies are fun, they are quick, short and more interesting.



Q: Who are you closest to on the "Hannah Montana" set?

A: Probably Jackson, you know, Jason Earles. He was in the movie "Dadnapped" with me. So was Moises, actually. I am totally closest with him because our families like to hang out a lot. We spend a lot of time together; we go snowboarding together.

Q: Do you ever get to keep any of Lilly's wardrobe?

A: I do! At the end of the season, Dahlia, who is the wardrobe designer, gives me the stuff that they know they are not going to use next year.

She buys a whole new wardrobe every year. I usually take home about two racks full of clothes.

Q: What is your favorite episode of "Hannah Montana"?

A: I think the Jonas Brothers episode. They come into Robbie's life and Hannah feels a little left out. We decide to dress up as boy rockers; that was really fun. And the Jonas Brothers are just the nicest people you will ever want to meet.

Q: Would you want your brother (Haley Joel) to be on "Hannah Montana"?

A: I don't know! I think I would rather keep that separate. Haley is more of a movie kind of person. I think he'd rather just watch me in the show rather than be involved in it. He has been focusing on school and his own things.

Q: How does your acting interfere with your daily life?

A: I try to keep my life separate with school and friends, but they do cross over. Managing school and acting can be hard. I am in 10th grade, and it gets pretty complicated. I am starting to think about college.

Q: Do you get to sing much?

A: I do. My song "I Don't Think About It," is No. 1 on Radio Disney right now. It was not supposed to be on Radio Disney, it was just supposed to be in the movie "Dadnapped." It was just supposed to be fun and something that they wanted me to do. I didn't write the song or do anything with it except sing. I have always been writing my own stuff, and I play guitar. I am thinking about an album. I want my stuff that I have written to be out there and part of the public.

Q: Do you feel like a different person ever since you started acting?

A: I am much more confident. I was kind of shy when I started. I don't get nervous anymore. Every Friday night when we shoot the show, we have an audience of about 200 people. I don't even notice that they are there because I feel so comfortable around them.

BOOK REVIEW

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT
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"The London Eye Mystery,"

By Siobhan Dowd

Ages 9-12

First, some background:

The London Eye is a hugely popular tourist attraction in London, England. It looks like a gigantic bicycle wheel—only, instead of a rubber tire around its rim, it has 32 glass-and-steel capsules, each of which can hold 25 people for the 30-minute ride. The view from the top is spectacular: On a clear day, you can see 25 miles away.

More than 3 million people ride the London Eye each year.

Until now, all of them have returned safely.

■ ■ ■

Ted and Kat's cousin Salim is visiting for a few days and says he'd like to ride on the London Eye. Ted and Kat have been already, but, being good hosts, are happy to go back.

The line is really long, so it seems like a stroke of really good luck when a man emerges from the crowd and offers the kids one ticket for the ride. They accept and give it to Salim, who walks up the ramp, waves and boards one of the passenger capsules for the 30-minute ride.

Exactly a half-hour later, the passengers get out of the sealed capsule, but there is no sign of Salim.

Is it possible to vanish into thin air? Was Salim kidnapped, did he run away or is there some other explanation?

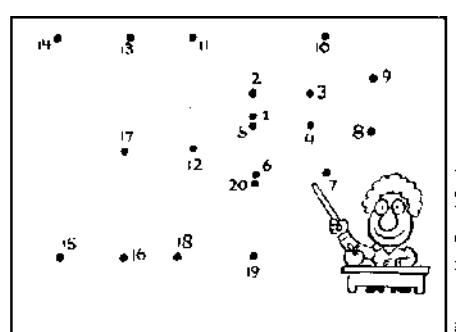
That's the mystery facing 12-year-old Ted and his older sister when the police seem stumped. Fortunately, despite normal sibling spats, they make a good detective team. In part that's because Ted has a medical condition that causes his brain to function in an unusual way.

That might be just what's needed to solve this unsettling and unusual case.



THE WASHINGTON POST

The London Eye is a hugely popular tourist attraction in London, England. It looks like a gigantic bicycle wheel. Salim enters the ride—and disappears. His cousins seek to solve this unsettling and unusual mystery.

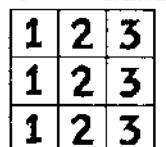


WHAT TWO LETTERS of the alphabet have nothing between them? Connect the dots to find out the answer!

Answer: Letters N and P have 0 (nothing) between them.

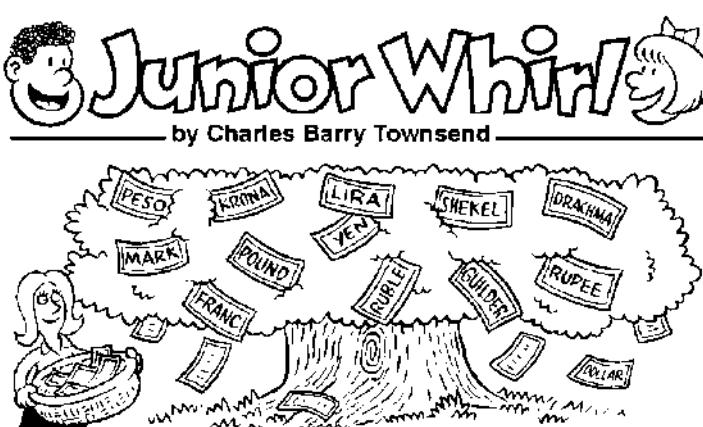
AS EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE!

See if you can rearrange the numbers in our square so that the sum of any row, column, or the two diagonals will total 6.



FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the Word Square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "BRAKED." See if you can replace these letters in the square so that you will have four three-letter words across and three four-letter words down.

Answers: (Across) Are, bed, leg, she. (Down) Able, rear, edge



WHO SAYS MONEY DOESN'T GROW ON TREES?
See if you can match the currencies with their countries of origin.

1. Peso A. Russia
2. Mark B. Netherlands
3. Franc C. Israel
4. Krona D. Greece
5. Pound E. Mexico
6. Ruble F. Japan
7. Lira G. India
8. Yen H. Sweden
9. Rupee I. Germany
10. Guilder J. Italy
11. Shekel K. France
12. Drachma L. Great Britain

Answers: 1-E, 2-L, 3-K, 4-H, 5-L, 6-A, 7-J, 8-F, 9-G, 10-B, 11-C, 12-D.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ It's been reported that the dog that played Toto in "The Wizard of Oz" was paid more for its performance in the iconic film than Judy Garland was.

■ During this election year, it might be wise to keep in mind the fact that it was famed Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw who made the following observation: "Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few."

■ In Japan, purple is the traditional color of love.

■ If you were in the Pacific Northwest recently, you may have been fortunate enough to make it to Eugene, Ore., for the 20th annual Jell-O Art Festival. The event also featured a Tacky Food Buffet, composed entirely of edible Jell-O delicacies.

■ Statistics show that one out of every 1,000 people in the United States is a murderer.

■ At one time in the Philippines, it was traditional for a man to declare his intent to marry by throwing a spear into the front steps of his intended bride's home, symbolizing that the woman had been spoken for. The tradition has fallen into disuse these days, though; a gold engagement ring is common now. I'm sure the brides are much happier this way.

■ If you could take all the water from the world's oceans and form it into a ball, you would have a sphere that would be about one-third the size of the moon. You would also have quite a feat to brag about.

■ Those who study such things claim that the common housefly can give you 30 different diseases.

■ In ancient China, one fairly common method of suicide was to eat a pound of salt.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "We are here and it is now. Further than that, all human knowledge is moonshine." —H.L. Mencken

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MAGIC MAZE — MONSTER

U K H D A X U Q N D K H E B Y
V S P M J H E B E Y V T Q O L
I G D B Y D E Y E G U B W T R
P F R A N K E N S T E I N S L
M K I F D N B D E Y W U S A S
Y Q O M E G I L A K I E C F D
B T Z E M X W G U E N I S Y Q
O N R K I L J H H H H K G L F
D G C A T V A Y C T W O V L T
S Q P L P N O O Y L M O W E K
I H F E C B L M Z S Y C W T V

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Bug-eyed	Green-eyed	Night	Telly
Cookie	Lake	Party	Time
Frankenstein	Movie	Sea	Two-headed
Gila	Mythical	Smog	

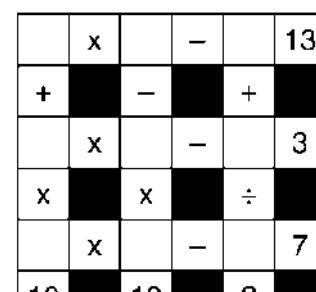
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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

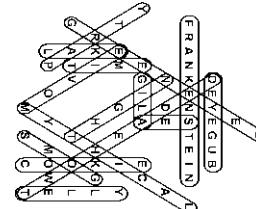
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!



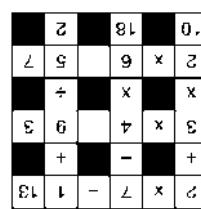
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER



Small pets face bigger risk

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I read your column on caring for a hamster, and how they can easily become sick if there is a draft or their cage is not cleaned. My question is, if my hamster is sick, how long do I have before it dies? —Kate H.

DEAR KATE: Because illness in pets can differ in severity, it's often difficult to say how quickly things can progress from your pet seeming somewhat down to critically ill. In small pets like hamsters, an illness can become very severe, very quickly—a matter of hours.

An inexperienced pet owner can have a tough time discerning how serious an illness is. Heck, even an experienced pet owner can miss signs: Many cat owners have stories of how their cats "hid" an illness until it became quite serious.

So, if you are ever in doubt about the health of your hamster (or fish, or cat or any pet), contact your veterinarian immediately, or even just bring your pet to the office. The vet can examine your hamster, determine how ill it is and start treatment immediately. Your vet also can show you how to look



Paw's corner

by Sam Mazzotta

for signs of declining health, as well as give lots of information on keeping your pet healthy.

Even if your pet is perfectly fine, the vet will never criticize or laugh at you for being concerned, and will probably applaud you for bringing it in "just to make sure." So, don't delay when it comes to your pet's health—always consult a vet if you're not sure.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Make quesadillas for Cinco de Mayo



by Donna Erickson

ingredients according to taste:

Shredded Monterey Jack cheese; shredded cooked chicken; finely chopped green onions, diced and drained; canned green chile peppers; and chopped, seeded fresh tomato.

Carefully fold the tortilla in half.

Cook on a large skillet or griddle over medium heat for about 2 minutes on each side or until lightly browned.

Cut quesadillas in half or in thirds.

Serve with guacamole and salsa if you wish.

Tip: Oven method—Preheat oven to 325 F. Prepare two or three quesadillas on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake until cheese is melted, about 10 minutes. Remove, slice and serve.

I like this new bean-dip version for hearty and fresh-tasting quesadillas;

BEAN DIP QUESADILLAS

This bean dip is enough for about six quesadillas, and it can be made by blending the following ingredients in a blender or food processor.

- 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained
- 1/4 cup cream cheese
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon cumin powder
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce
- 2 teaspoons prepared roasted garlic or 1 teaspoon powdered garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro (optional)
- 6 flour tortillas

Spread some of the bean dip mixture on half of a large flour tortilla. Top with the following

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Rodman arrested in domestic dispute



Rodman

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dennis Rodman has been arrested for allegedly hitting a woman at a hotel in the Century City area of Los Angeles.

Police say the 46-year-old former NBA star was arrested Wednesday night after officers answered a report of a domestic dispute. Officer Sara

Fayden says they learned Rodman had struck a woman who suffered "injuries to her arm."

There was no word on the seriousness of the injury.

Rodman manager Darren Prince told TMZ.com that Rodman and his girlfriend had too much to drink, argued, and Rod-

man grabbed her arm and left a bruise. Prince told TMZ that Rodman's drinking has escalated because of a nasty divorce and he plans to enter rehab.

Rodman was jailed for investigation of felony domestic violence and freed on \$50,000 bail early Thursday.



Actress Uma Thurman is escorted into Manhattan criminal court where she is scheduled to testify against the man accused of stalking her, Thursday, May 1, 2008, in New York.

Uma Thurman testifies at trial of her accused stalker

NEW YORK (AP)—Uma Thurman testified Thursday that she was frightened and panicked when her accused stalker sent her a card with a drawing of an open grave, a headstone and a man standing on the edge of a razor blade.

The 38-year-old actress, testifying at the trial of defendant Jack Jordan, said he had tried unsuccessfully to get into her trailer while she was shooting the movie "My Super Ex-Girlfriend" in lower Manhattan's SoHo area in November 2005.

He tried a second time after mingling with some movie extras. When an assistant intervened, Jordan asked him to give

Thurman the illustrated card.

"I was completely freaked out," she said of the drawing, which was on a religious confirmation card. "It was almost like a nightmare; it was scary."

The card also contained random words written in a spiral. Some were crossed out. From the witness stand, she read some of the words that were legible: "chocolate, mouth, soft, kissing," and the sentence, "My hands should be on your body at all times."

During Thurman's testimony, Jordan occasionally drummed his fingers lightly on the table. He rarely looked in her direction.

Thurman testified that bit of paper fluttered out when she

opened the card. One of them was a picture of a bride with her head torn off.

Jordan is accused of following and trying to contact Thurman from early 2005 until late last year. He is charged with stalking and aggravated harassment, and faces up to a year in jail if convicted.

His lawyer, George Vomvolakis, said he believed Thurman's demeanor during her testimony was "a little overdone and exaggerated. I'm not saying she's acting, but reactions are unreasonable."

Vomvolakis also said he instructed Jordan not to stare at Thurman while she testified "because we don't want to make her uncomfortable."

Woman who's afraid to drive hits the brakes on engagement

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I fell in love with "Wade" the night I met him. We almost got married, but he couldn't get past my fear of driving. As a child, I witnessed an accident. It was horrific and left me emotionally scarred. If I try to drive in traffic I freeze up and get flashbacks. I have tried for years to put this behind me.

After three years, Wade finally issued an ultimatum. Unless I drove, he would not buy me an engagement ring. He said my inability to drive would create too great a hardship for us.

Abby, I wanted desperately to get past my fear, but couldn't—not even for love. I love Wade dearly, but not enough to endanger other people's lives. I ended the relationship and told him I hoped he'd find a pretty driver. It was the hardest thing I have ever done, and I miss him every day. Did I do the right thing?

—HEARTBROKEN IN WEST VIRGINIA

DEAR HEARTBROKEN: You may have acted hastily. There are mental health professionals who specialize in helping people with post-traumatic-stress problems, and you appear to fall into that category. Please talk to your doctor and ask for a referral to see if your childhood trauma can be overcome. Then, if you're successful, call Wade and invite him out for a "spin"—preferably to the nearest jeweler. If you make one more attempt to get past this, at least you'll know you left no stone unturned.

DEAR ABBY: I am pregnant with our second child and recently learned that my husband of six years, "Kyle," has gambled away almost our entire savings. Kyle says he did it because he was drunk, and he only gets the urge to gamble when he drinks. He promised he will never do it again.

I wish I could believe him, but this isn't the first time Kyle has gambled and lost large sums of money. I don't know what to do. Should I leave him, or stay and try to help him? I have no idea how to help, but I can't continue to live this way, wondering if and when he's going to do it again. Please help me.

—PREGNANT AND WONDERING

DEAR WONDERING: Your husband may have promised he won't gamble again, but promises are not enough. Because married couples can be held accountable for their spouse's debts, you must take control. It is possible to "help" only those individuals who are willing to help themselves. If your husband must seek help for his gambling you may have to separate your finances from his.

A group that can offer you some much-needed support is Gam-Anon Family Groups. This is a 12-step fellowship for husbands, wives, relatives and friends of compulsive gamblers—people who have been affected by their loved ones' problem. Contact it at www.gam-anon.org, or by calling (718) 352-1671.

Your husband should also contact Gamblers Anonymous, P.O. Box 17173, Los Angeles, CA 90017, or call (213) 386-8789. Its Web site is www.gamblersanonymous.org.

The American Psychiatric Association identified pathological gambling as a psychiatric disorder in 1980. Some doctors specialize in the illness. The National Council on Problem Gambling, a nonprofit organization, refers gamblers to qualified mental health professionals who are trained to work with gamblers and their families. The toll-free phone number is (800) 522-4700.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby - Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Ex-nanny countersues Rob Lowe, wife in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A former nanny has countersued Rob Lowe and his wife for sexual harassment. The suit filed Wednesday in Los Angeles alleges that Lowe's wife, Sheryl, walked around naked in front of nanny Laura Boyce and made repeated crude comments about her boyfriend's genitals. It doesn't make any sex allegations against the actor.

Sheryl Lowe's attorney, Lawrence Stein, says the allegations are false.

Boyce also claims she was wrongfully fired and is owed money. She's one of three ex-employees the Lowes sued last month, claiming they spread lies about the couple and broke confidentiality agreements.

One of those sued, former nanny Jessica Gibson, also has countersued, claiming Rob Lowe sexually harassed her.



AP
In this Jan. 21, 2006 file photo, actor Rob Lowe and his wife Sheryl arrive to the screening of "Thank You For Smoking," at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

LA sex charge against 'Girls Gone Wild' founder is dropped

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Los Angeles judge has dismissed a sexual battery charge against "Girls Gone Wild" founder Joe Francis because prosecutors said they were unable to contact

his accuser.

The judge dismissed the misdemeanor count Thursday after city prosecutors said they were unable to proceed because they had not seen or heard from the 18-year-

old woman or an alleged witness.

Francis was accused of groping the woman's breasts and buttocks at a birthday party in Hollywood last year. The millionaire founder of the sex video

empire could have faced up to six months in jail.

Defense attorney Mark Werksman says Francis never touched the girl and that the case was based on lies and exaggerations.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



By Bryan Basset



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

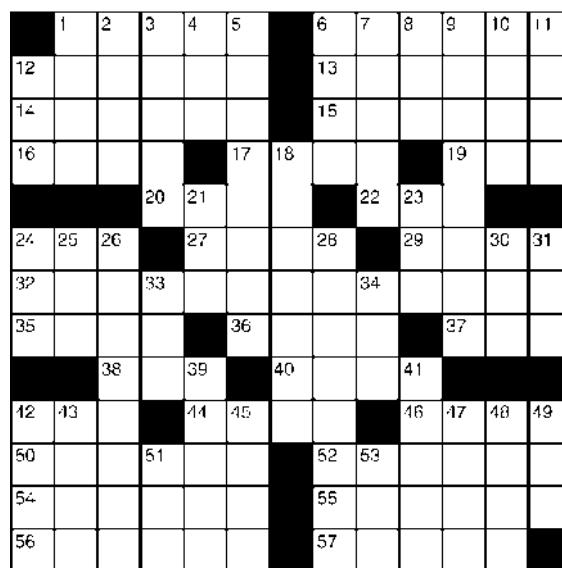
ACROSS

1 Cryptanalyst's concerns 36 Prospector's hope 57 Supermarket section 12 Family member 18 Merchants 21 Khan title 23 Race in neutral 24 Omega procoder 25 "And — the opposite shore ..." 26 100% 28 Choir's shout 30 Anger 31 1/6 fl. oz. 33 Scale member 34 Harem room 39 Prepare to propose 41 Early periods 42 Actress Spelling 43 Copied 45 Gets to the bottom of things? 47 Dirt 48 Lounge about 49 Galena or cinnabar 51 Goose egg 53 Luau dish

Solution time: 27 mins.



Yesterday's answer 5-3



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ or y.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

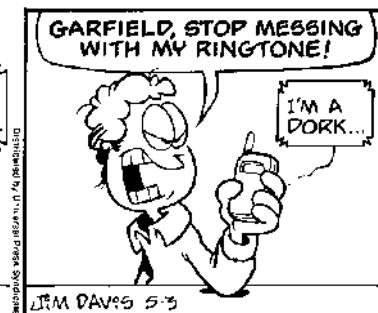
Garfield®



The Duplex



By Jim Davis



By Glenn McCoy



CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Dule Hill, 34; Christopher Cross, 57; Frankie Valli, 71; Pete Seeger, 89

Happy Birthday: If you try to come across as an authority in areas you know little about, you will be stopped. Be truthful and offer what will complement the efforts of others. A move may be exactly what you need. Once you feel safe and secure within your own world, everything else will work out. Your numbers are 3, 13, 24, 26, 30, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't get all worked up over nothing. Overreacting will only cause more trouble at home and in the workplace. Keep busy doing things on your own and it will help limit the stress you are undergoing. **★★★**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Work at improving your communications with the ones you love. A secret surprise for someone you love will work wonders for that relationship. A serious approach to a creative endeavor should be taken. **★★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Look for answers in the most unusual places and you'll find a quick solution to a responsibility you've been given. Don't limit yourself when your versatility is what will take you above and beyond the expectations put on you. **★★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep your decisions to yourself. Someone you are close to will be hesitant to agree or fearful of the outcome. You may know what you are doing but that doesn't mean that the people around you have your vision. **★★**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a different approach to things. A lifestyle change or altering your beliefs will pay off. Don't trust anyone who thinks he or she knows what's best for you when fear of losing you or jealousy is really the issue. **★★★**

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't allow someone to hold you back or discourage you. Open your doors to friends and neighbors and an interesting conversation will develop. Working as a team player will result in improvements within your community or group. **★★★★**

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Avoid travel or conversations with outsiders who are looking for someone to complain

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may find yourself in the middle of a controversy if you meddle in other people's affairs. Listen but don't make comments or gossip. In the end, you will make a good friend and ally with someone able to help you advance. **★★★★★**

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Keep things simple and playful but don't be tricked into spending on something lavish. There will be a fine line between helping someone and doing things for them. Enjoy the pleasures that your hard work has made possible. **★★★**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Focus on having a good time, not setting yourself up for trouble or having to deal with people who aren't on the same page. Get out with friends or attend a class or interesting event. Do not argue with family members. **★★**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a different approach to things. A lifestyle change or altering your beliefs will pay off. Don't trust anyone who thinks he or she knows what's best for you when fear of losing you or jealousy is really the issue. **★★★**

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Avoid travel or conversations with outsiders who are looking for someone to complain

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD
IN ASTROLOGYCOPRIGHT 2007
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

to. A chance to spend a little time with someone you love will secure your relationship and give you a chance to plan for the future. **★★**

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Revisit your dreams, hopes and wishes and you will realize what you need to do to get moving in a positive direction. An authority figure from your past will remind you of some of the experiences you had, enabling you to avoid making the same mistakes. **★★★★**

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A much-needed break with a loved one will help you feel better about your future and encourage you to move forward with an idea you have wanted to develop your whole life. Don't fear failure; success is built on the losses you have experienced. **★★★★**

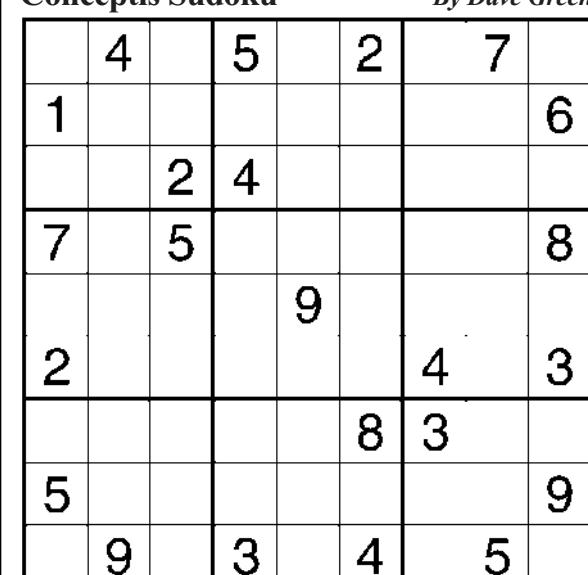
Birthday Baby: You know what you want and are determined, hard-working and inventive enough to get it. You are adaptable and outgoing in all you do.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

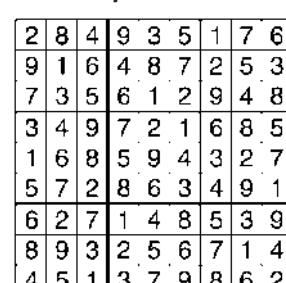
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below must fit in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The following letters spell the Wonderword.

SIMPLE MACHINES

Solution: 1 letters



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Axle, Bicyc., Chain, Crank, Direction, Distanc., Effort, Elevat., Factor, Force, Friction, Gear, Grooved, Handle, Heavy, Helix, Hydrul., Inclined, Lever, Lower, Machine, Mechanic., Parts, Physics, Pinion, Pivot, Plane, Pulley, Push, Raise, Ramp, Reverse, Ridges, Rope, Rotate, Screw, Sheet, Smooth, Surface, Thread, Torgue, Turn, Wedge, Weight, Wheel
Yesterday's Answer: Annoyng

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WHATZIT Solution:
One over the eight

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235-NEWS

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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- 3-Liner
- 5-Liner
- 3-Liner with picture
- 5-Liner with picture

COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)

\$25	
\$35	
\$45	
\$55	

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

1st position	\$13.00
2nd position	\$5.00
Succeeding positions	\$2.00

These rates apply to all job vacancy announcements on Saipan that include corresponding benefits and positions that are all under the same company name and dba.

Newspaper clippings are also available for \$.25 per copy.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:

- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Pistons crush 76ers in Game 6 to reach second round



PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Close for four games, no contest the last two. Richard Hamilton hit his first five shots during Detroit's overpowering start, and the Pistons rolled into the second round of the playoffs by crushing the Philadelphia 76ers 100-77 on Thursday night to win the series 4-2.

The Pistons convincingly won the last two games of a series that wasn't expected to last this long and will host the Orlando Magic, who eliminated Toronto in five games, on Saturday in the opener of the Eastern Conference semifinals. Detroit split four meetings with the Southeast Division champions this season.

Hamilton finished with 24 points, 13 in the decisive first quarter when he outscored the 76ers by himself. Chauncey Billups added 20 and Tayshaun Prince had 12 for the Pistons, who reached the second round for the seventh straight season.

They were all on the bench for nearly the entire fourth quarter, when the lead ballooned over 30 points. Detroit held Philadelphia without a field goal for nearly the first 6 minutes of the game, ending any real hopes the Sixers' had of forcing a Game 7 back in Michigan.

Andre Iguodala scored 16 points and

Detroit Pistons' Richard Hamilton looks to pass over Philadelphia 76ers' Willie Green during the second quarter of Game 6 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series Thursday, May 1, 2008, in Philadelphia.

AP



Sonics' Durant honored as rookie of the year

BELLEVUE, Wash. (AP)—Kevin Durant was so excited to learn he had just won the NBA Rookie of the Year award, he went back to sleep. That's what seven months and 82 games—more than double the amount the lanky 19-year-old had played in any previous season—can do to a teenager.

Fatigue that wasn't apparent while Durant soared in Seattle this season finally caught up to the SuperSonics' star this week. Then his mother, Wanda Pratt, woke him up with the news that he had just joined mentor LeBron James plus Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Oscar Robertson and Wilt Chamberlain in a legendary legacy of rookie award winners.

"I was asleep. It was a LONG season," Durant said Thursday with a smile about Seattle's 20-62 disaster, the worst season in team history. "My mom woke me up when she got the call. She screamed. I was happy."

"Then I went back to sleep."

Durant, the national college player of the year at Texas and the No. 2 overall draft pick last year, was as dreamy as advertised during an otherwise nightmare season in Seattle.

Despite being the only man opposing teams schemed to stop, the 6-foot-9 Durant averaged 20.3 points, 7.7 more than any other rookie. He was the only rookie to lead his team in five categories—points, blocks, steals, free throws made and free throw percentage. Durant blocked more shots than any other guard in the league (75).

The rest of Seattle's season involved losses and lawsuits.

Sonics owner Clay Bennett recently got league approval to move the team to Oklahoma City. Seattle has a trial

date next month, its effort to make the Sonics play inside KeyArena for the final two seasons of their lease.

"It's good to shine some light on our team. You know, a lot of people aren't real fond of our team right now," Durant said.

He recently purchased a home in suburban Seattle. His mother lives with him. She and Durant's father, Wayne Pratt, joined four other family members at Thursday's announcement.

"I love Seattle. My home's here. My mother's here," Durant said, acknowledging where he plays next season is out of his control.

Durant received 90 first-place votes (545 points) from a panel of 125 writers and broadcasters. Atlanta's Al Horford finished second with 390 points, and Houston's Luis Scola was third with 146.

It's all beyond what Durant could have comprehended two years ago as a senior at Montrose Christian School in Rockville, Md.

"If you would have told me a couple of years ago that I would be the NBA Rookie of the Year, to be in the same company as LeBron James, Larry Bird ... I would have told you you were crazy," he said.

"I didn't think I would get it, because those other rookies helped their teams get into the playoffs."

Some believe that benchmark should have given Horford the award. Sonics coach P.J. Carlesimo isn't one of them.

"It would have been a travesty if they had picked anyone else," Carlesimo said minutes before general manager Sam Presti said the coach "absolutely" will return next season.

Durant said Horford congratulated him on the award Wednesday, just before Game 5 of the Hawks' surprisingly competitive first-round playoff series against Boston.

"I'd rather trade this in to be where he's at right now - in the playoffs," Durant said.

One of the first text messages of congratulations Durant received was from James, the Cleveland superstar whom Durant calls a mentor and good friend. Durant attended James' playoff games with the Cavaliers in Durant's hometown of Washington last weekend.

James was the Rookie of the Year in 2004, when he was 19.

"He told me congratulations. That's when I was thinking like, 'Man, I'm in the same company as LeBron, when he was a rookie,'" Durant said. "I just smiled inside."

"He's like a big brother to me."

Though Carlesimo said "If he did anything wrong, at times he made it look too easy," Durant admitted he struggled early in the season. He said he was taking too many 3-point shots and not driving to the basket.

After the All-Star break, Durant said he took it upon himself to be more aggressive. He got higher percentage shots and more chances at the free throw line. He finished the season by averaging 24.3 points in April, including a season-best 42 in the finale at Golden State.

Yet he has areas where he wants to improve.

"Post skills. Ball-handling. Shooting," he said. "When I get bigger and stronger, hopefully my game will take off to the next level."

Andre Miller had another quiet game with 11 for the Sixers, who outplayed the heavily favored Pistons for the first 3 1/2 games of the series but never really had a chance after that.

The second-seeded Pistons won 59 games during the regular season, second-best in the NBA behind Boston. But they quickly found themselves trailing the upstart 76ers, who were just 40-42, 2-1 then fell behind by 10 points at halftime of Game 4.

Detroit rallied to win that game, then trailed for only 23 seconds over the final two mismatches. As easy as the Pistons' 98-81 victory in Game 5 was, they had even less trouble in this one, racing to a 10-0 lead and never giving the disappointing crowd of 14,130 a chance to get into the game.

Players took the court to music and a clip from "Rocky III" in which Apollo Creed tells Philadelphia's favorite movie hero that, "There is no tomorrow!"

It took just minutes to realize that for the Sixers, there wouldn't be.

The score was quickly Hamilton 7, Philadelphia 0, with the Sixers' sloppy

start including an errant pass from Iguodala that struck Samuel Dalembert right upside his recently mohawked head for a turnover, followed a minute later by Thaddeus Young throwing up a 25-footer from 23 feet.

By the time Miller made Philadelphia's first field goal with 6:13 left in the period, that only cut Detroit's lead to 16-5. The Pistons shot 69 percent in the quarter, opening a 30-12 lead.

A Philadelphia flurry early in the second cut it to 12, but the Pistons regained control when their starters returned and were ahead 51-33 when Billups hit a jumper at the halftime buzzer.

Fans booed as the Sixers walked off the court trailing 79-51 after three, but this should go down as a good season for a team that was widely expected to finish at the bottom of the Atlantic Division. Philadelphia was 18-30 in early February but closed with 22 wins in its last 34 games, then rallied from 15 points down in Game 1 to stun the Pistons at Detroit.

The few fans that were left gave the Sixers a standing ovation in the final minute and again after the game.

Sonics GM says Carlesimo will return as coach

BELLEVUE, Wash. (AP)—P.J. Carlesimo will return to coach the SuperSonics next season, the team's general manager said Thursday, ending speculation he might be fired after the worst season in Seattle history.

At an event introducing Kevin Durant as the NBA Rookie of the Year, GM Sam Presti declared what Carlesimo, who was standing about 15 feet away, did not yet know.

"Will he come back?" the youngest GM in the league was asked.

"Absolutely," the 31-year-old Presti said.

Minutes earlier, the 58-year-old Carlesimo was asked if he had received assurances he would be the Sonics' coach next season.

"It's not a question of assurances. You know, you (only) get told if you are not coaching," Carlesimo said, chuckling. "Sam and I have had great conversations."

Carlesimo made it clear he wanted to continue his first head coaching job in the NBA since 1999.

"I'm happy here," he said. "I love it here."

Two weeks ago, immediately after the Sonics' 20-62 season, Presti gave only a vague answer when asked if there would be any coaching staff changes—Carlesimo included.

Almost daily meetings since then between the man who just finished his first season running an NBA team and Carlesimo apparently ensured the coach would return for an eighth season as a head coach in the league.

In the end, Presti decided against changing coaches for the second time in two offseas. The team has enough turmoil already.

Last month, the league approved the franchise's move to Oklahoma City. Next month, Seattle's trial begins against its oldest professional sports team in an attempt to keep it in town.

"We've had tangible discussions. We're both committed to building the best basketball operation that we can," Presti said. "We're committed to going forward."

Last July, the Sonics hired Car-

lesimo as their 15th coach, his first NBA head coaching job since Golden State fired him in December 1999. Presti chose him over former Minnesota coach and Seattle assistant Dwane Casey. Presti was the assistant GM in San Antonio when Carlesimo was a Spurs assistant, through the 2006-07 season.

Days before hiring Carlesimo, Presti dismantled the veteran core of the Sonics by trading All-Star Ray Allen to Boston for the draft choice that brought fifth-overall pick Jeff Green to join Durant. Presti also allowed second-leading scorer Rashard Lewis to leave for Orlando as a free agent.

During training camp last fall, Carlesimo was realistic and blunt in declaring that the Sonics were in for a long season.

After a predictably poor start to the season, Presti traded veterans Wally Szczerbiak and Delonte West to Cleveland in a three-team deal with Chicago. Even with the heroics of Durant, who averaged 20.3 points per game, Seattle finished with a record better only than Miami (15-67). The Heat just changed coaches from Pat Riley to Erik Spoelstra.

"We knew certainly what we were getting into," Carlesimo said. "Everyone realized what the Western Conference was going to be like this year."

Carlesimo has yet to get his young team to play better defense. Seattle allowed 106.3 points per game this season, fourth most in the league and more than four points per game higher than the freewheeling Sonics allowed in 2006-07 under Bob Hill. Seattle has barely played any defense since Nate McMillan left for Portland after the 2004-05 season, the Sonics' last in the playoffs.

Carlesimo has a career record of 203-284 (.417) in the regular season with Portland, the Warriors and the Sonics. He is 3-9 in the postseason, where he hasn't been since 1997 with the Trail Blazers. He was the 1989 NCAA coach of the year at Seton Hall while leading the Pirates to the national championship game.

Braun double in 9th leads Brewers over Cubs



CHICAGO (AP)—

Ryan Braun hit a two-run double off Kerry Wood during Milwaukee's three-run ninth inning and the Brewers rallied to beat the Chicago Cubs 4-3 on Thursday.

Wood wasted his third save opportunity in seven chances and a fine performance by Carlos Zambrano, who pitched 6 1-3 innings and helped himself with his 13th career homer—tying the team record held by Ferguson Jenkins.

Braun homered in the sixth and went 3-for-5 with three RBIs. Brian Shouse (2-0) got the final out in the eighth and Eric Gagne pitched the ninth for his ninth save in 13 chances.

Phillies 3, Padres 2

At Philadelphia, Ryan Howard hit a tie-breaking solo homer in the eighth inning to lift Philadelphia over San Diego.

Tom Gordon (3-2) pitched a perfect eighth and Brad Lidge retired the side in the ninth for his seventh save in as many chances. Lidge hasn't allowed an earned run in 12 innings this season.

The slumping Howard connected off Joe Thatcher (0-3) leading off the eighth, driving one into the right-field seats. The 2006 NL MVP also had an RBI double against starter Randy Wolf. Howard is batting just .184 with six homers and 14 RBIs.

Adrian Gonzalez hit a two-run homer for San Diego.

Nationals 3, Pirates 2

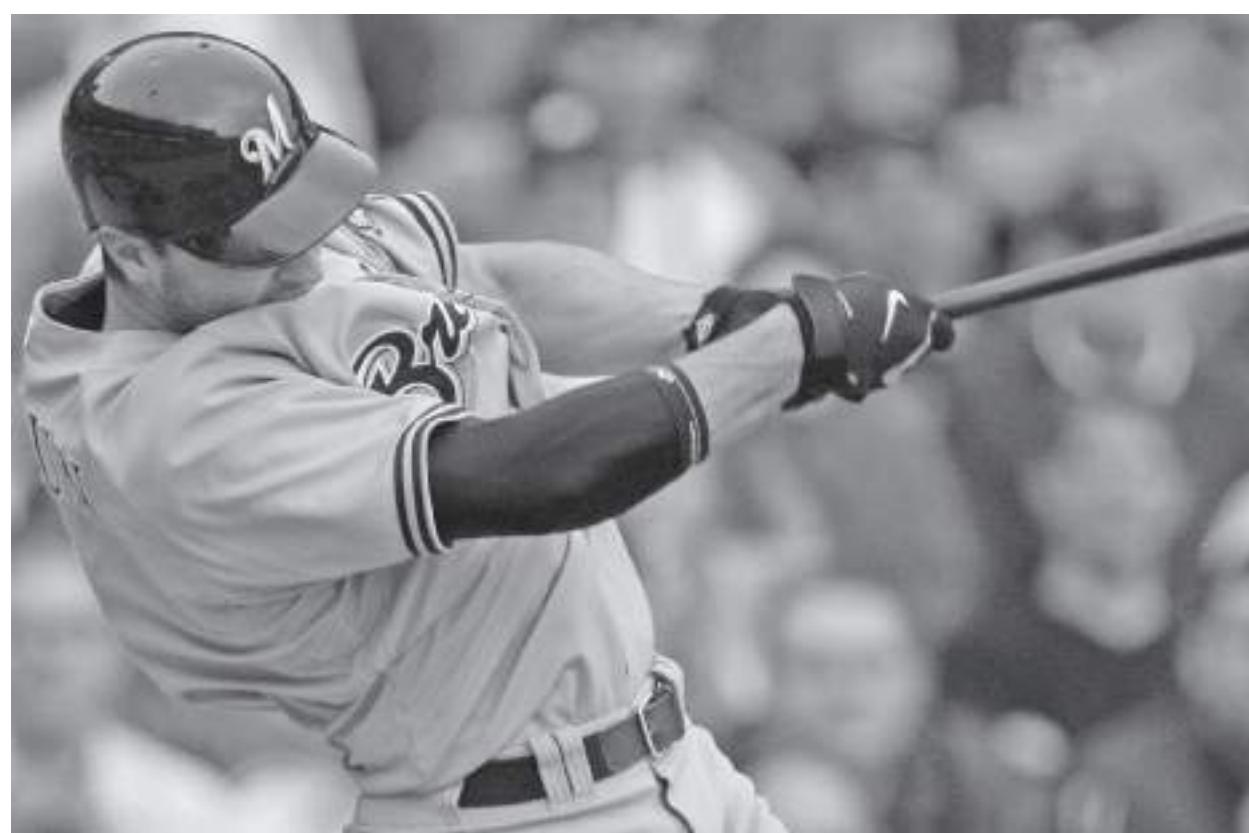
At Washington, Austin Kearns broke a tie with a two-out RBI single in the eighth inning, and Washington edged Pittsburgh to run its winning streak to a season-high four games.

After Cristian Guzman singled and Nick Johnson was hit by a pitch, Kearns drove an outside pitch to right off John Grabow (1-1) to score Guzman, who barely beat the throw from Xavier Nady.

Freddy Sanchez and Ryan Doumit homered for the Pirates.

Dodgers 5, Marlins 3

At Miami, Matt Kemp drove in the tiebreaking run with a ninth-inning



AP

Milwaukee Brewers' Ryan Braun hits a two-RBI double against the Chicago Cubs during the ninth inning of a baseball game on Thursday, May 1, 2008 in Chicago.

single and Los Angeles beat Florida to complete its second consecutive series sweep.

The Dodgers have won six straight, their longest winning streak since taking seven in a row to close the 2006 season. The Marlins have lost three in a row for the first time this year.

With the score 3-all, Rafael Furcal led off the ninth with a walk against Kevin Gregg (3-2), advanced on Juan Pierre's sacrifice and scored on Kemp's single.

Blue Jays 3, Red Sox 0

At Boston, A.J. Burnett scattered three hits pitching into the eighth inning and Alex Rios homered for the Toronto Blue Jays, who wrapped up a miserable road trip with a victory over the Boston Red Sox.

Toronto finished the nine-game trip at 2-7 and avoided a sweep after Boston had won the two previous games in

the last at-bat. The Red Sox and Blue Jays combined for seven total runs in the series.

Burnett (3-2) continued his mastery of the Red Sox, improving to 4-0 against Boston while allowing just one run in 16 innings over two starts at Fenway Park. Burnett struck out five and walked five in 7 2-3 innings, and B.J. Ryan pitched the ninth for his third save.

Indians 3, Mariners 2, 11 innings

At Cleveland, Asdrubal Cabrera broke an 0-for-14 slump with a bases-loaded single in the 11th inning to give Cleveland the win over Seattle.

Jhonny Peralta drew a one-out walk off Mark Lowe (1-2). Travis Hafner then doubled to left and Jamey Carroll was hit by a 1-2 pitch, loading the bases. Sean Green came on and struck out Franklin Gutierrez on three pitches, the

final offering way outside. But Cabrera, batting just .190, lined an 0-1 pitch to center and was promptly mobbed by teammates.

Athletics 15, Angels 8

At Anaheim, California, Jack Cust went 4-for-4 with a go-ahead homer that triggered an eight-run fifth inning, Emil Brown had four hits and Oakland gained a split of the four-game series against the Angels.

Justin Duchscherer (2-1) allowed six runs—only one earned—and six hits over five innings with six strikeouts in his 200th major league game and eighth career start.

The A's, who beat the Halos 14-2 in Monday's series opener, had 20 hits. Frank Thomas, Bobby Crosby, Daric Barton, Ryan Sweeney and Kurt Suzuki each had two RBIs and Cust scored three runs.

Thomas and Crosby each hit two-run singles during a 49-pitch meltdown by Angels relievers Dustin Moseley (1-3), Darren O'Day and Chris Bootcheck in the fifth.

Tigers 8, Yankees 4

At New York, Miguel Cabrera homered, tripled and drove in three runs, leading Detroit to its first three-game sweep in New York since 1966.

Reserve infielder Ramon Santiago made the most of his first start at shortstop this season, turning in a key defensive play and hitting a tiebreaking triple to back Nate Robertson (1-3).

Magglio Ordonez had three hits—including a two-run double off Ian Kennedy—and scored twice for the Tigers, who won for the eighth time in 10 games.

Bobby Abreu hit a three-run homer for the banged-up Yankees, who have lost six of eight.

Rays 4, Orioles 2

At Baltimore, Matt Garza allowed three hits in six innings, Carl Crawford snapped a tie with a two-run single in the seventh and Tampa Bay downed Baltimore.

The Rays took two of three from Baltimore to win their third straight series and climb four games over .500 (16-12) for only the third time in the 11-year history of the franchise. Tampa Bay has never been five games over the break-even point. Adam Jones homered for the Orioles, who have lost four of five.

Rangers 2, Royals 1

In Arlington, Texas, Sidney Ponson got his first victory in a year and Texas finished off a successful homestand Ian Kinsler hit a leadoff homer in the first and Ramon Vazquez hit a tiebreaking drive in the sixth off Zack Greinke (3-1).

The Rangers took two-of-three from both Minnesota and Kansas City during the homestand.

Ponson (1-0) allowed six hits, struck out five and walked two in eight innings. C.J. Wilson worked a perfect ninth for his sixth save in seven chances.

Forgotten Toms leads Wachovia

months ago at the Match Play Championship caused a disk problem to flare up. He followed that withdrawal with two missed cuts while on pain medication, shot an 80 in the final round of the Masters, and tied for 61st at the Verizon Heritage.

Golf wasn't fun anymore for Toms as he pulled into his reserved parking spot for past champions here this week ranked 133rd on the money list and thinking about cutting back on his schedule.



"I haven't had as much soreness after the round in my back," Mickelson said. "I haven't had any back problems, but just muscular, sore. I think not having to bend over as much might allow me to practice a little bit easier."

Bohn, like Toms and Mickelson, had an early tee time. He made six birdies in a satisfying round as he works his way back from stress fractures in his ribs suffered last year at the Memorial.

"I'm 100 percent healthy and I'm still trying to shake a little of the rust off my golf game," Bohn said.

Zach Johnson and Ben Curtis led a

group of nine two shots back, while Vijay Singh and Rory Sabbatini were among 11 three off the lead at 70. No one was able to make a charge late in the day on Toms as the course dried out and the greens quickened.

It was another rough day for Masters champion Trevor Immelman. After missing the cut last week at the Byron Nelson Championship, Immelman shot 76 and was buried at the bottom of the leader board.

The overnight chill was still in the air when Toms holed a nearly 55-foot birdie putt on the 12th, the third hole of his round. He hit a 5-iron to about 3 inches on No. 13 for another birdie, and suddenly his confidence was soaring.

Toms recovered from a bogey on No. 7, when his ball landed in a sand-filled divot, with consecutive birdies to close his round, only his fifth round in the 60s in his last 36 tries.

While he was realistic about his chances to win, Toms was just happy he finally had something good to talk about.

"First of all, you show up at an event and you're not fired up to play because you're not getting the results," Toms said. "Then you go home and everybody has questions for you. It just never stops."

Toms has tried numerous remedies and has received countless tips on how to ease the pain in his back, but for now is putting off surgery.

"I guess if I was 25 and in perfect shape it wouldn't be that big of a deal. But I'm not either one of those," the 41-year-old Toms said. "It's just something I have to be smart about—picking up luggage, kids, not sleeping in a bad position."

Toms will enter Friday's round at one of his favorite courses in an unfamiliar spot. Having not won since the 2006 Sony Open, three more solid days here could change his attitude about the game.

"I'll either get back to a high level or I'm not sure you'll see me as much," Toms said. "I don't enjoy not playing great golf. I'm secure enough at home with my family and financially to where if I'm not having fun and I feel like it's a struggle physically I won't continue to do it."

Playing in the morning when the greens were still soft from the drenching rain earlier in the week, Toms made eight birdies, including a near ace at the 13th hole, to take a one-shot lead over Phil Mickelson and Jason Bohn.

It was a welcome change for the 2001 PGA Championship winner, whose last victory was more than two years ago. Swinging too hard two

BRAVES

From Page 28

Nick Junior Jones.

Lifoifo then struck out Muna, with runners at the corner, in his second at bat in the same inning for the third out.

Frankie Lieto pitched three innings in relief sur-

rendering one earned run on four hits with two strikeouts and three walks.

Ricky Joe Renguil led the Braves' 17-for-36 batting going 2-for-4 scoring four runs, a triple, and two RBIs. Lieto went 2-for-5 with one run, a triple, and three RBIs.

Jones and Roy Tudela combined for 6-for-9 in batting

with three runs and three RBIs. Jones also had a double and a triple. Lifoifo went 3-for-5 with two runs.

Lucio Kalen was held to a 1-for-2 batting but ripped a two-run inside-the-park home run in the top of the third to go with his two runs and three RBIs.

Muna pitched three innings

for the A's to earn the loss after giving up eight earned runs on 10 hits fanning four and walking five batters.

Ada pitched three innings in relief, allowing five earned runs on seven hits with two strikeouts and two walks. He also batted 3-for-4 with two runs scored while Renguil went 2-for-2 with two RBIs.

TIGERS

From Page 28

It was a tight ballgame from the start as neither team led by more than 10 points, but the Tigers proved they had a lot of gas left in their tank to complete the win.

The game seemed like a finals matchup as players from both teams played like there was no tomorrow. Players battled for every ball possession at times diving just to keep the loose ball in play.

The trio of Dan Bustillos, Mike Torregosa, and Dennis Espiritu joined hands in the final period to give Finance/Shipping a still manageable four-point lead midway in the quarter.

That was when Charlie Fernandez and Noel Sabordo took over, pouring in the points needed to let the Tigers escape with the win.

Sabordo paced the Tigers with 38 points, while Fernandez scattered 37 more.

Torregosa led Finance/Shipping with 31 markers, while Bustillos and Espiritu added 23 and 17 apiece.

In the first game, Leo Pascua took over in overtime to lift Security Department to a come-from-behind 79-71 victory



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Defending champion Food and Beverage Tigers pose for a group photo in last week's opening of the 7th Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Inter-Departmental Basketball League at the TDHC staff house court.

against FO/Housekeeping.

Housekeeping seemed headed for the win with Gabby Cajayon's game-long exploits but could not find the knockout punch to silence their opponents.

Pascua then waxed hot in the fourth period to force the five-minute extension, then carried the scoring chores for his team in overtime. He finished with a game-high 43 points.

The league opened on Sunday with a simple ceremony that saw participating teams

parade around with their colorful uniforms and muses. F&B Chefs won the best in uniform trophy, while FO/Housekeeping won the best muse.

TDHC's hotel manager Tom Liu delivered the opening remarks and made the ceremonial toss, while Ed Canooy declared the games opened.

There were two games scheduled to be played on opening day when it was cancelled due to rain. The Tigers were supposed to face the Taga-Housing Department in the first game,

Santos and Alvin Alvarez are waiting for their finals opponent after they compiled a 5-1 record, losing only by default against Ariel Mariano and Sherwin Samson.

Santos and Alvarez ended their campaign with a 31-27 win over the duo of Saul Gargallo and Roger Vales.

The teams of Mariano and Samson, Gargallo and Vales, and Robert Reyes and Gerry Balarao, will contest the second finals berth.

In other men's B division games last Tuesday, Samson and Mariano scored consecutive wins over the pairs of June Pineda and Jojo Savellano, 31-20, and Gary Bandoja and Aries Cordero, 31-28.

Reyes and Balarao also defeated Bandoja and Cordero, 31-15, while winning by default against Erick Peña and Jonathan Perez.

The duo of Babes Cielo and Loyda Ito will face off with the tandem of Marlene Peraja and Emily Vargas in the finals after both teams finished with identical 5-1 cards.

It was an amazing comeback for Cielo and Ito after suffering a 28-31 loss to Samonte and Savellano on opening day. They went on to win their next five games, ending their campaign with a 31-9 demolition of the pair of Elma Labuson and the come-backing Janice Bungalo.

Peraja and Vargas wrapped up their assignments with consecutive wins against Lanie Bartolome and Lot Abuel, 31-24, and Juliet Ramos and Janis Parcon, 31-17.

Savellano and Samonte earned some consolation as they will meet Shirley Kim and Malou Malasarte in the battle for third place.

Savellano and Samonte defeated Labuson and Bungalo, 31-13, and Bartolome and Abuel, 31-29, in the final day of the elimination round. Kim and Malasarte escaped with a 31-25 decision against Ramos and Parcon.

The pairs of Paul Navarro and Efren Cacdac and Angie Ito and Ana Rose Omori enjoy a twice-to-beat advantage in the men's and women's C division finals.

Navarro and Cacdac will meet Obet Aguilar and Sherwin Pusillo in the men's C final, while Ito and Omori will once again test the partnership of Lucelle Lampera and Lherie Galvan.

Navarro and Cacdac ended their campaign with a 21-13, 21-8 crushing of Rick Brien and Cris Hilario, while Ito and Omori grinded out a 21-12, 22-24, 21-13 triumph over Lampera and Galvan.

Monday shift. Only the higher score will count for the tournament. All participants have to pay the \$15 SBA annual membership fee.

The champion is guaranteed \$100 in prize money but it could go up to as much \$150 depending on the number of participants. Women participants will only have separate prizes if there are at least 10 entries.

Youth bowlers (12 to 19 years old, not bowling in any leagues or averaging less than 170 in any league) will only bowl on Sunday for the Bing Energy Drink Prince and Princess of the Lanes. Entry fee is \$10.

After being sponsor-less for the whole of 2007, the Saipan Bowling Association's monthly King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament as well as its season-

ending bowlfest has secured the help of MARPAC for this year's competition.

The Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament aims to crown 12 monthly champions through the course of the year.

For early registration and payment for the May tournaments, see or contact Gigi Zapanta at 288-5627 or e-mail zapanta@pticom.com. (Mark Rabago)

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES**MLB STANDINGS****AMERICAN LEAGUE****East Division**

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	16	12	.571	—
Boston	17	13	.567	—
Baltimore	15	13	.536	1
New York	14	16	.467	3
Toronto	12	17	.414	4 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	14	12	.538	—
Cleveland	14	15	.483	1 1/2
Detroit	14	15	.483	1 1/2
Minnesota	13	14	.481	1 1/2
Kansas City	12	16	.429	3

West Division

Los Angeles	18	12	.600	—
Oakland	18	12	.600	—
Seattle	13	16	.448	4 1/2
Texas	11	18	.379	6 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE**East Division**

Philadelphia	16	13	.552	—
New York	14	12	.538	1/2
Florida	15	13	.536	1/2
Atlanta	12	15	.444	3
Washington	12	17	.414	4

Central Division

St. Louis	18	11	.621	—
Chicago	17	11	.607	1/2
Milwaukee	16	12	.571	1 1/2
Houston	13	16	.448	5
Cincinnati	12	17	.414	6
Pittsburgh	11	17	.393	6 1/2

West Division

Arizona	20	8	.714	—
Los Angeles	15	13	.536	5
San Francisco	13	16	.448	7 1/2
Colorado	11	17	.393	9
San Diego	11	18	.379	9 1/2

Yesterday's Games

L.A. Dodgers	5	Florida	3
Milwaukee	4	Chicago Cubs	3
Philadelphia	3	San Diego	2
Washington	3	Pittsburgh	2
Tampa Bay	4	Baltimore	2
Texas	2	Kansas City	1
Toronto	3	Boston	0
Detroit	8	N.Y. Yankees	4
Cleveland	3	Seattle	2
Oakland	15	L.A. Angels	8

WACHOVIA CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP)—Scores from Thursday's first round of the \$6.4 million (\$4.12 million) Wachovia Championship being played on the 7,442-yard, par-72 (36-36) Quail Hollow Country Club course:

David Toms	35-32	67	
Jason Bohn	33-35	68	
Phil Mickelson	33-35	68	
John Merrick	35-34	69	
Vaughn Taylor	34-35	69	
Zach Johnson	36-33	69	
Nick Flanagan	34-35	69	
Camilo Villegas	35-34	69	
Ben Curtis	35-34	69	
Stephen Ames	36-33	69	</

Youth Football Festival at San Antonio



MP United's Jack Sharer, left, tries to get past a Matansa FC player in their game last week in the Youth Football Festival at San Antonio Elementary School.



MP United Blue players huddle up before the game while Matansa Red members look on.



Paire's Mickey Coleman, left, and Jhen Joyner of IFC chase the ball.



Enrico Del Rosario attempts a penalty kick.



Enrico Del Rosario of Independent Football Club tries to look for an open teammate.



IFC coach Jersh Angeles huddles with his players after the game.



Enrico Del Rosario, center, chases the ball while a teammate tries to help him out.



Enrico Del Rosario watches the direction of his shot.



IFC and Paire FC players battle for ball possession.



A Matansa FC player, right, beats the MP United goalie to score a goal.



Braun double in 9th leads Brewers over Cubs

Ryan Braun hit a two-run double off Kerry Wood during Milwaukee's three-run ninth inning and the Brewers rallied to beat the Chicago Cubs 4-3 on Thursday. **25**

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Sports

28 SATURDAY, MAY 3, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Pistons crush 76ers in Game 6 to reach second round

Close for four games, no contest the last two.

24



Braves dump A's in Majors

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The AA Ent./TCC World Braves of Tanapag pulled off the necessary stops before coasting to a 17-8 win over the Tan Holdings Athletics A's in Thursday's Majors division game in the Saipan Little League at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field. Lefty J.J. Lifoifo earned the win despite nearly allowing the A's to comeback in the game. He lasted three innings and threw 75 pitches giving up six earned runs on four hits with two strikeouts and seven walks.

He needed 49 pitches just to get out of a bases-loaded jam in the third inning where the A's scored six runs to close in at 10-7.

John Rey Gilles had a lead off walk in the bottom of the third and moved to second on a Gregorio Muna walk. Gilles was caught on a 1-5 putout play when he tried to steal third base.

Larry Guerrero had a fielder's choice while Davin Ada lined up a single in a gap between the second base a centerfield to load up the bases.

Lifoifo then forced Jacob Tomokane to an infield fly, which he caught for the second out.

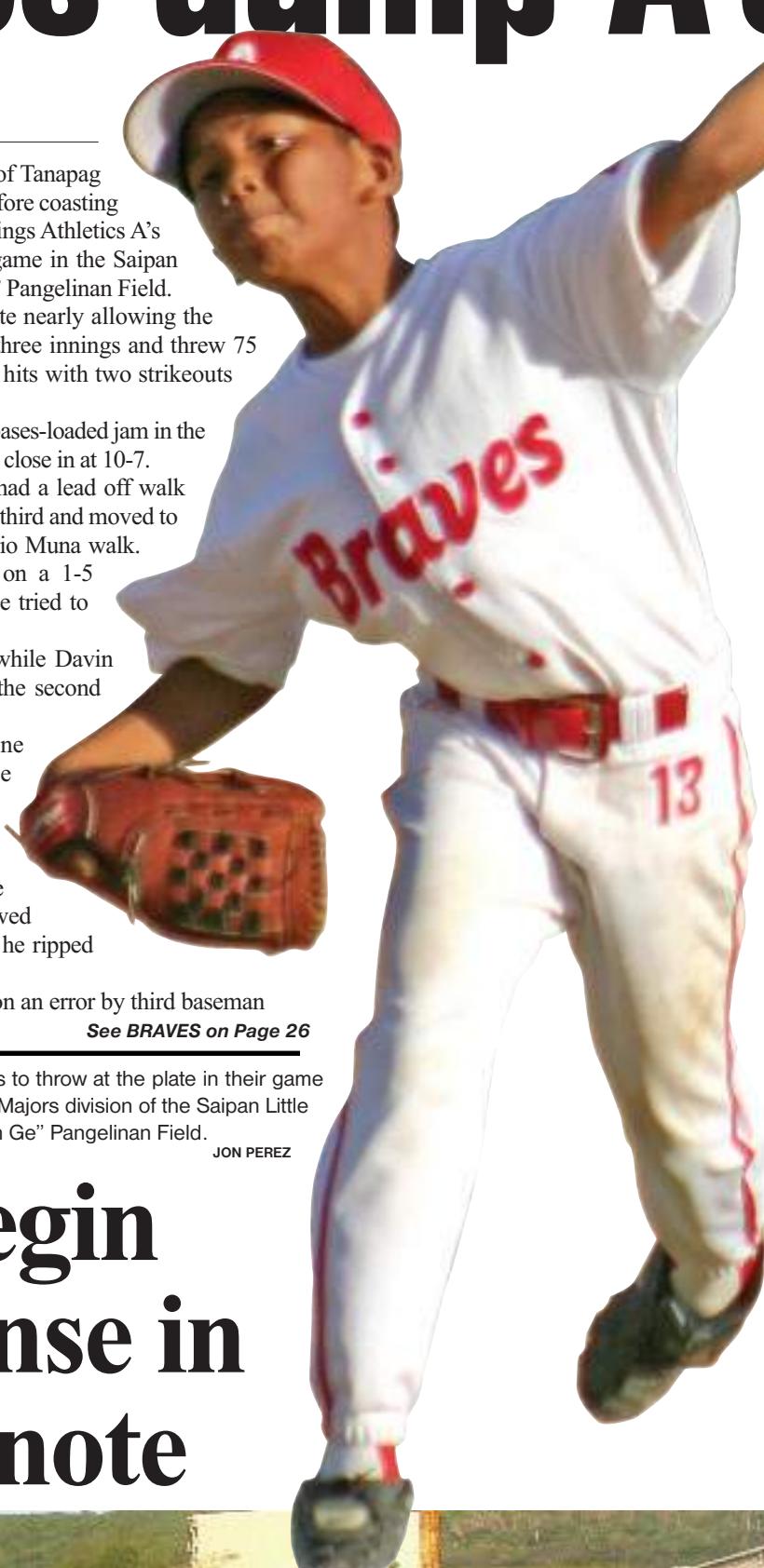
Lifoifo then gave up three straight RBI walks to Gregory Attao, Max Castro, and David Muna as the A's scored three runs in that stretch. Roger Rengul allowed Attao and Castro touch home plate when he ripped an RBI single to left field.

Muna added one more when he scored on an error by third baseman

See BRAVES on Page 26

Tanapag Braves pitcher J.J. Lifoifo prepares to throw at the plate in their game against the Tan Holdings Athletics A's in the Majors division of the Saipan Little League on Thursday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

JON PEREZ



Tigers begin title defense in winning note

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

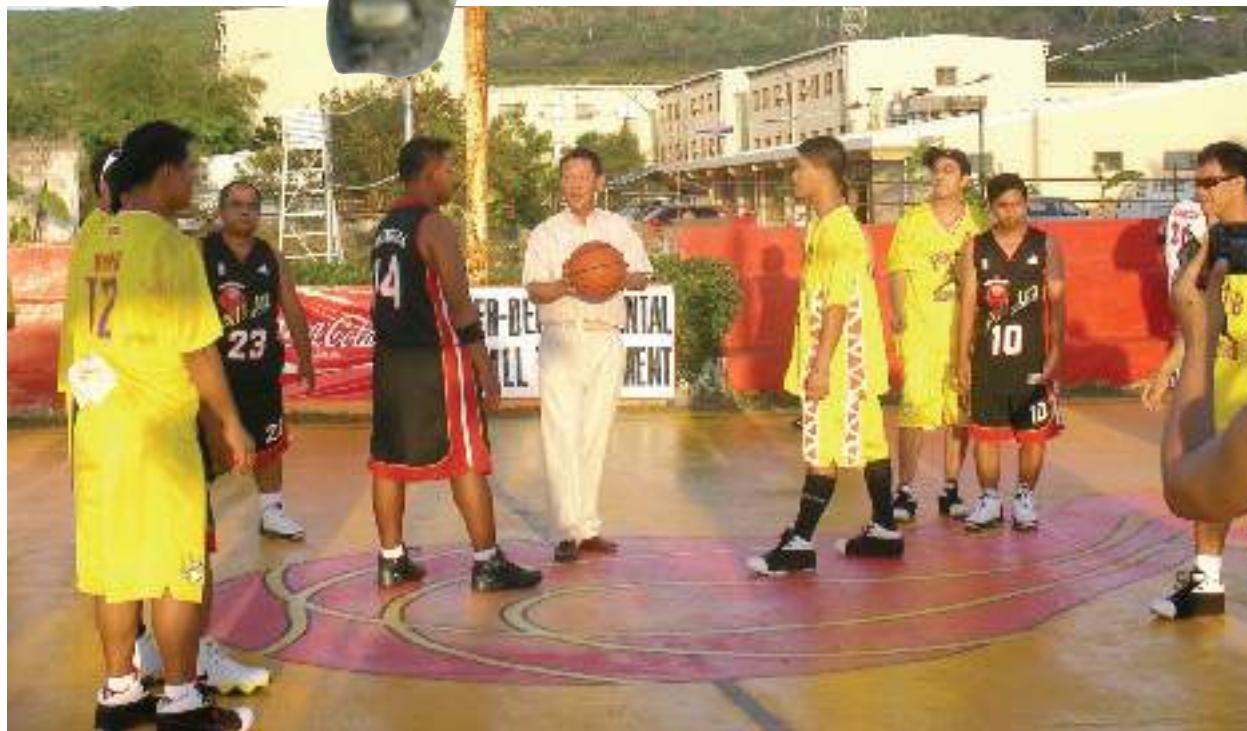
 Defending champion Food and Beverage Tigers opened up their title-retention bid with a 98-92 win over Finance/Shipping in Tuesday night's game in the 7th Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Inter-Departmental Basketball League at the TDHC staff house court.

Both teams renewed their rivalry on the hard court as the game was a rematch of their 2006 championship game, which the Tigers won.

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Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino hotel manager Tom Liu, center, prepares to do the ceremonial toss in the opening of the 7th Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Inter-Departmental Basketball League last week at the TDHC staff house court.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



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The Men's A division pairs of, from left, John Nguyen and Wijay Pruwajatan, Ryan Achas and Lito Mendoza, Macoi Aguda and Edwin Montoya pose for a group photo after Tuesday night's games in the Inaugural Michelob Ultra Badminton Tournament at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Michelob badminton meet ends today

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Inaugural Michelob Ultra Badminton Tournament wraps up today with champions in the five divisions set to be crowned when competition begin at 6pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Aside from the finals of the five divisions, the knockout round of the mixed doubles class will also be played in the final day of the tournament, which is being supported



in part by Michelob-MARPAC, At Your Service, SaipanCell, JET Holdings, PMIC, Serenity Salon, Elegance Café, NIC, Canton Restaurant, National Office Supply, Makeover Beauty Salon, Megavision, Venus Beauty Salon, Vargas Construction, Esolutions Inc., Philippine Consul General Wilfredo Maximo, and N.C. Matsumoto.

Tournament committee chair Macoi Aguda is requesting all players in the mixed doubles division to come

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May Budweiser bowling tomorrow and Monday

The May Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes as well as the May Bing Energy Drink Prince and Princess of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament takes place tomorrow and Monday at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

The two-day Budweiser May King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament will be held in May 4 and 5.

Sunday's roll-off would begin as early as 3pm, while Monday's competition starts at 6pm. Registration starts 30 minutes prior to game time. Awarding ceremonies immediately follow the end of competition on Monday.

The competition is exclusive for

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